NMTech now offers Google certificate programs. PAGE 2
THAAD/patriot training exercise on Tinian and Rota. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Aldan

'Tinian presents the best solution for CNMI's economic recovery'

» Aldan: It makes sense for administration, Legislature to work with Tinian leadership

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the increasing role Tinian plays in the U.S. military's plans for the region and with the tourism industry still struggling to rebuild, the island presents the best solution for the economic recovery of the entire CNMI, according to Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin P. Aldan.

Speaking before the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee's Fiscal Year 2024 budget hearing

See TINIAN on Page 4

TSGT MICHAEL COSSABOOM
French Air and Space Force A400M pilots conduct a search and rescue mission over the Pacific Ocean, July 10, 2023. The crews were alerted and searched the ocean for a disabled vessel, which they located and provided air support for local search and rescue crews.

Probable cause is found to try man accused of sexually abusing girl, 9

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found probable cause to try a man who is being accused of sexually abusing a 9-year-old girl.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho has found probable cause to try

See PROBABLE on Page 4

Free medical, vet services starting today

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Soldiers unload medical equipment for clinic setup and patient treatment at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Medical Care and Treatment Site in preparation for Operation Wellness CNMI, which begins today, July 12.

Saipan community members seeking medical and veterinary services are encouraged to visit the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Medical Care and Treatment Site, the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog

See FREE on Page 4

11 rescued off Rota coast

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:
80

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

American, French, and Canadian forces, in collaboration with local CNMI law enforcement, rescued on Monday 11 individuals who were en route to Guam and were aboard a distressed vessel off the coast of Rota.

» U.S. and int'l forces band together to rescue 11 who were en route to Guam

U.S, French, and Canadian forces joined local law enforcers to rescue the 11 individuals and the operator of the CNMI-registered boat that was

See RESCUED on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Joel Lesh has been promoted to VP and general manager of Morrico Equipment as of July 1.
PAGE 11

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
Here's what homeowners can watch out for so they know when their roof needs to be fixed.
PAGE 14

LIFE & STYLE
Madonna says she is focused on her health and getting back on stage after a "serious infection."
PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Deadline to apply for SCC scholarship is extended

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is reminding the public and students that the SCC Educational Scholarship program for the fall 2023 semester is still open. Also, the deadline for submission has been extended to Friday, Aug. 11, 2023, at 12pm.

SCC offers two scholarship categories—the Chamber Education Award and the Pellegrino Vocational Education Award—to support students attending Northern Marianas College and vocational classes at the Northern Marianas Technical School, including the Cultural Maritime Training program with 500 Sails. These scholarships aim to empower and assist talented individuals in pursuing their educational goals in the Northern Mariana Islands.

"Education is crucial for shaping our community's future, and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to advancing this vision. Our scholarship program supports students in their higher education journey, providing them with financial funds for educational use," said the Chamber in a news release yesterday.

Funds for these scholarships were raised through the SCC 14th Annual Golf Tournament, highlighting its commitment to providing educational opportunities to deserving students.

Applications are available at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce office at the second floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (Suite 201-A), and can also be accessed on the SCC website at www.saipanchamber.com/scholarship-program/.

To apply, interested applicants are encouraged to visit the SCC website and submit their applications along with the required supporting documents to scholarship@saipanchamber.org.

For additional information or inquiries about the SCC Educational Scholarship, contact scholarship@saipanchamber.org or call (670) 234-7150. ***(PR)***

House bill seeks to establish right of survivorship

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives passed Friday a bill that proposes to establish a right of survivorship for certain causes of action in civil lawsuits.

Sablan

With all 18 House members present voting "yes" at the House special session, House Bill 23-61 now goes to the Senate for action.

Reps. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) and Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) were absent, but excused.

Before the voting, Rep. John Paul Sablan (Ind-Saipan, who is the main author of the bill, said many jurisdictions and states all over the country recognize the right of survivorship for causes of action in civil lawsuits brought by injured family members who subsequently died before the causes of action have been resolved.

Sablan said that's really the intent of the legislation to create a statute that gives the right for survivorship to continue their loved one's lawsuit in any course of action.

Gualo Rai Youth Center temporarily closed

The Office of Youth Affairs announced yesterday that the Gualo Rai Youth Center will be temporarily closed for regular services. The facility will be used by the 807th Medical Brigade for scheduled Innovative Readiness Training activities that have been organized in partnership with the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs and the Office of the Governor, from July 12, 2023, to July 22, 2023.

"Standard working operation will continue, and our office will temporarily relocate to Koblerville Youth Learning Center," said an Office of Youth Affairs news release yesterday. "We apologize for any inconvenience."

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the Office of Youth Affairs at (670) 288-0023 or follow the Office of Youth Affairs on its social media platform for updates and other details. ***(PR)***

NMTech now offers Google certificates

The Northern Marianas Technical Institute is in partnership with Google to offer students career certificates that are flexible online training programs that teach job-ready skills in the high-growth field of cybersecurity, data analytics, project management, IT support, digital marketing and e-commerce, and user experience (UX) design. This collaboration is the first of its kind in the Pacific region.

No prior experience is needed for the students to take Google's online certification programs, which aim to prepare students for entry-level roles in fields that are projected to grow over the next five to 10 years. Google employees with decades of experience in these fields develop and teach the certificates. Each certificate includes 150+ assessments as well as hands-on experience so learners have the necessary skills to be successful on the job, and all content is industry-vetted.

The certificates are 100% online, on demand, and are typically completed in three to six months part time (5-10 hours per week). Registration starts on July 17, 2023 and ends July 28, 2023. For more information and to sign up for Google Career Certificates, visit our campus in Lower Base or email us at admissions@nmtechcnmi.org. You can also reach us at (670) 235-6684 or check out our website www.nmtechcnmi.org ***(NMTech)***

House OKs bill to re-appropriate $881,987 to medical referral

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives passed Friday a bill that would re-appropriate $881,987 to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Health Network Program, which is previously known as the Medical Referral program.

With 18 House members voting "yes," House Bill 23-60, HD1 now goes to the Senate for action. Reps. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) and Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) were absent but excused.

Under the bill, a total of $881,987, which is what remains of the $1.085 million that was previously appropriated for the Solid Waste Transfer Station, will be re-appropriated to the Health Network Program for travel, housing, and transportation expenses. However, $50,000 of the $881,987 shall be set aside for interisland medical referrals. The CHCC chief executive officer shall be the expenditure authority of the funds.

Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan), who is the principal author of the legislation, said the Health Network Program is in dire need of additional funds to assist Commonwealth patients who are seeking medical assistance or treatment outside of the CNMI.

According to the bill, the Office of the Capital Improvement Projects under the Executive Branch has identified funds for the architectural and engineering design, and construction of a solid waste transfer station for the southern part of Saipan. However, Section 2(6) of Public Law 20-61 already appropriated $1,085,000 for the exact same project.

House floor leader pro tem Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan), who is among the many co-sponsors of the bill, thanked Attao for introducing the bill as the legislation helps the medical referral system.

Yumul requested that the House also explore, with the approval of the administration and Marianas Public Land Trust, to set aside seed money so that interest earned on those investment under MPLT can be designated to address the medical referral system permanently.

"That's something that we as a body need to explore. We need to look at avenues because majority or 99.9% of the medical referral are indigenous people and funds remitted to MPLT is supposed to help the indigenous people," he said, adding that this is something that the House needs to look at and start a conversation.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Members of the House of Representatives read during a special session Friday the floor amendment offered by Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao to a bill that would re-appropriate $881,987 for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Health Network Program.

"I understand it won't be popular, but at least it starts the discussion on setting aside a certain amount of funds so that any interest earned goes directly to the medical referral system," he said.

Attao said that's just one of the options that they're looking at. He said one of the plans that's being laid out right now is to leverage a line of credit, whether it be from other institutions outside of the CNMI, bonds or others. Attao said MPLT is definitely one of the entities that they're looking at, not just to borrow money but actually to have a line of credit.

He said a lot of these projects won't move forward without money upfront for the payment of these vendors for a drawdown.

"We have probably about $100 million with the MPLT but maybe a line of credit of $15 million to $20 million just to start moving these projects forward and the federal monies will be remitted to the CNMI will go directly to MPLT," Attao said.

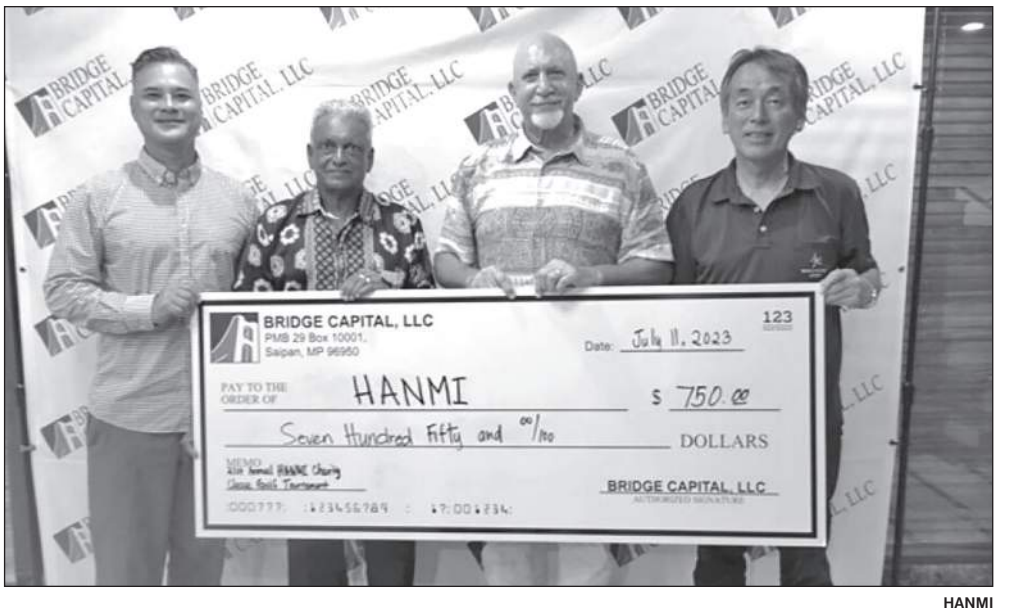
He said they are not even touching MPLT money, but just allow the CNMI government to at least open a line of credit so these projects can move forward. Attao said the faster they get these projects moving in the CNMI, the faster they are going to collect taxes from these projects.

"So that would actually help infuse money to our general fund," he said.

Regarding medical referral program, Attao echoed Yumul that they need to start looking at that angle with MPLT.

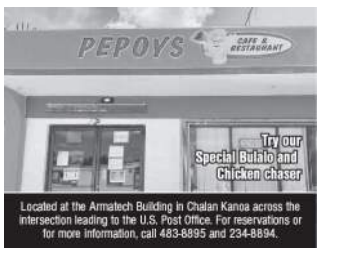
HANMI TOURNAMENT HANMI

Island Training Solutions owner Jim Arenovski, right, presents a $5,000 hole-in-one prize on July 10, 2023, to tournament committee chair Juko Ishikawa for the 21st Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament, slated for July 15, 2023, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.



HANMI

Bridge Capital LLC vice president/GM Bartley Jackson, second right, presents $750 cash on July 11, 2023, in support of the 21st Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament, slated for July 15, 2022, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. From left, Bridge Capital community relations and property acquisitions specialist Alex Palacios, tournament committee member Das Krishnan, Jackson, and tournament committee chair Juko Ishikawa.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JOB OPENING

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EUCON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Job Duties:
Provides instruction at the Secondary School level in the following classes: Fundamental Math, Algebra I and Geometry; creates lesson plans; evaluates student performance and provides feedback; communicates students' progress to parents; develops and updates curriculum for the classroom; maintains accurate records of students' progress; keeps order in the classroom; posts grades and sends grade reports to parents; performs other teaching-related duties.

Other requirements:
Baccalaureate degree in liberal arts, stem-science, or engineering; ability to communicate and interact with students and parents; ability to encourage and motivate students; basic computer and Microsoft software skills; Chinese language skills preferred, as school instructs both native English and Chinese speaking students

Work Location: Eucon International School, Kulales Place, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai

Mail Address: P.O. Box 500087, Saipan, MP 98950

E-Mail address: hr@eucon.edu

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW23-ITB No.: 42300080

SUBMISSION DATE: August 04, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Groundwater, Leachate and Gas Testing at the Marpi Solid Waste Facility, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **July 05, 2023** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **July 21, 2023,** 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **July 27, 2023** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAY N. YUMUL
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

‘Questionable’ expenditure practices raise concerns

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) disclosed yesterday that her office has received concerns about questionable expenditure practices that prompted her to ask the Office of the Public Auditor to conduct an audit.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*’s inquiry about her latest audit request, DeLeon Guerrero said they simply cannot and should not turn away from these public concerns.

“In order to put matters of concern to rest, let’s audit and reveal the findings and/or recommendations to the people,” she said.

Last July 6, the Senate president requested acting public auditor Dora I. DeLeon Guerrero about the use of indirect cost received by the Office of Grants Management. She said a provision of the Commonwealth Code requires the OGM to “promulgate rules and regulations for awarding subgrants.” Yet if subgrants have already been granted without these required regulations, then such grants were issued without any criteria to follow, DeLeon Guerrero said.

DeLeon Guerrero

She asked OPA to audit this matter as public funds may have been used improperly.

DeLeon Guerrero said yesterday that there is no other motivation in asking for such an audit other than to have transparency and promote accountability.

She said an earlier audit she requested last February was for the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Community Disaster Loan funds.

She said both audit requests have been acknowledged by OPA, through her conversation with the acting public auditor.

DeLeon Guerrero noted that the latest U.S. Government Accountability Office report clearly speaks about the urgency for the CNMI to fix its financial issues, from its spending habits to its financial management and system issues.

RESCUED

From page 1

found off the coast of Rota.

Saipan Tribune learned that most, if not all, of the passengers on the boat hold expired CNMI-Only Transitional Workers (or CW-1) visas.

In a news release from the U.S Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, it said that nine of the 11 people rescued are citizens the People’s Republic of China.

“Local law enforcement [on] Rota is currently addressing these matters. The U.S. Coast Guard remains committed to working closely with local authorities to ensure the safety of those at sea and the security of our maritime borders,” said U.S. Coast Guard Warrant Officer Sara Muir.

It is believed that these undocumented individuals were headed for Guam seeking asylum. They are currently on Rota awaiting transport to Saipan.

Muir said that watchstanders at U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam’s Joint Rescue Sub-Center Guam received a distress call at around 5:05pm last July 10 from the operator of the 21-foot vessel *Full 20 Horizon*, stating the vessel was disabled and adrift in 6-foot seas and 12 mile-per-hour winds at about 30 nautical miles northwest of Rota.

In response, watchstanders issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast, alerting mariners in the area to be aware of the distressed vessel.

Watchstanders initiated coordinated efforts with the CNMI Department of Public Safety on Rota, who launched their 27-foot vessel to aid in the search and rescue mission.

A French Air and Space Force A400 Atlas military transport aircraft and its crew were the first aircrew to respond. They launched from Andersen Air Force Base. They were able to locate the vessel at about 8pm after running a search pattern. They worked to vector in the DPS crew.

Unfortunately, the initial rescue attempt by the DPS crew was hindered by severe sea conditions as winds increased to 18 mph and seas built to 8 feet, forcing them to abort the mission.

However, the French Air and Space Force A400 crew remained on the scene and kept the disabled vessel in its sights.

Recognizing the severity of the situation, the crew of USCGC *Myrtle Hazard* (WPC 1139), which was on a port call on Saipan, was recalled and watchstanders reengaged with HSC-25 to address the evolving circumstances.

Watchstanders also requested additional overhead support from the U.S. Air Force 36th Wing, who offered a Royal Canadian Air Force HC-130 airplane and crew to replace the French crew due to fuel constraints.

At 11:15pm the Canadian crew informed watchstanders that the lights on the distressed vessel went out, but they maintained visual contact with its position.

The U.S. Navy MH-60 Nighthawk helicopter and crew launched to aid the rescue efforts further. The Nighthawk crew arrived at approximately 1am and immediately commenced hoisting the operator and passengers.

The aircrew transported those rescued to the Rota airport where local emergency responders and law enforcement were waiting for them. No injuries were reported.

The Nighthawk and Canadian aircrews returned to Andersen Air Force Base at 2:40am, successfully concluding their part in the rescue operation.

Meanwhile, the *Myrtle Hazard* crew continued their search for the vessel relocating it around 10am.

“Partnerships with the U.S. Air Force 36th Wing and U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 at Andersen Air Force Base proved invaluable in securing the assistance of multiple aircraft crews for the response,” Muir said.

Capt. Nick Simmons, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, emphasized the importance of aircraft in search and rescue operations at sea

“Aircraft crews play a crucial role in our efforts to save lives in challenging maritime situations. Using aerial assets, combined with our local partnerships, ensures a swift and effective response to distress calls, ultimately increasing the chances of a successful rescue,” he said.

PROBABLE

From page 1

John Roman Lisua, 38, on one count of sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Camacho later remanded Lisua back to Department of Corrections and ordered him to return to court on July 24, for his arraignment.

During last Monday’s probable cause hearing, the government appeared through chief prosecutor Chester Hinds while the defendant was represented by assistant public defender Molly Dennert.

The court also heard the testimony of police detective Kroy A. Ogo.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, a woman and a 9-year-old child visited the Department of Public Safety’s main office in Susupe last June 22 to file a complaint.

The woman told police that Lisua sexually abused the child around April this year, but she only found out about it on the day they filed the complaint.

On June 27, the Department of Youth Services interviewed the child and learned that the abuse happened on April 19.

According to the child, Lisua had entered the bedroom where she had been spending the night in the early hours of April 19. The victim alleges that Lisua removed her blanket and pants and sexually abused her. The child told DYS that Lisua only stopped when she turned over and would not turn back despite the defendant forcing her to.

The victim claims she clearly saw that the person who sexually abused her was Lisua because when he came into the room and removed her blanket, a lamp was still on.

During a bail hearing last week, Camacho imposed a $25,000 cash bail on Lisua, who was initially facing charges of sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

FREE

From page 1

Shelter, or Saipan Cares for Animals from July 12 to July 18, 2023. These services, provided at no cost to the public, aim to support the local community’s healthcare needs.

Tinian community members can access medical services at Tinian Junior/Senior High School, while veterinary services are available at the Tinian Dog Control Office. Rota community members can receive medical and veterinary services at Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior/Senior High School. The clinics on Rota and Tinian will operate from July 12 to 17, 2023.

Individuals on Saipan who are planning to access medical services are asked to park and register at American Memorial Park baseball field. From there, a shuttle bus will be available to transfer patients to the CHCC MCATS.

These services are part of the Innovative Readiness Training “CNMI Wellness Mission,” which is a joint-service medical mission primarily comprised of approximately 130 service members from the U.S. Army Reserve and augmented by the Air National Guard, U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Air Force.

No insurance or identification is necessary to receive services.

Service members who are credentialed healthcare providers will provide vision screenings, health exams, dental services public health education, and veterinary services.

The IRT CNMI Wellness Mission provides military medical members training opportunities while providing direct and lasting benefits to the residents of Saipan.

For more information, visit the CNMI Office of the Governor’s Facebook page (@cnmigovernor) or visit https://tinyurl.com/IRTCNMI. The Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs will be providing service updates on its Facebook page (@cbmagov).

Additional information on the IRT program can be found at irt.defense.gov. ***(Office of the Governor)***

TINIAN

From page 1

for the Tinian municipality last Monday, Aldan said that, as it stands today, Tinian is the primary focus of the U.S. Department of Defense and national security in the region.

“So wouldn’t it make more sense for the administration and Legislature to work with the Tinian leadership to pass policy, laws, and regulations that can benefit the entire CNMI,” he said.

Aldan said all CNMI municipalities are experiencing financial and economic challenges so they need to be united now more than ever if they have any chance of rebuilding the CNMI.

In the same vein, Aldan said he shares Rota Mayor Aubry Hocog’s position to ask the Legislature not to suspend the Hotel Occupancy Tax allocation for Tinian and Rota in the fiscal year 2024 budget. He said these funds are essential for the promotion of tourism and the funding of their annual festivals and ground maintenance contracts.

Aldan again asked the House Ways and Means Committee to appropriate funding for emergency situations and provide each municipality with funding prior to or at the beginning of any emergency or disaster so they are able to procure the necessary goods and services for response and recovery. Aldan said he is sure Hocog will support this request as she recently experienced the same challenges Tinian had with Super Typhoon Yutu.

Also, he raised with the committee the need to give the mayor expenditure authority over solid waste management funds. This is a request that Aldan said he has made to the Legislature every year and is becoming increasingly important, with the increased Department of Defense exercises and projects on Tinian.

Currently, this authority lies with the Department of Public Works secretary and he said it needs to be transferred to the mayor or Tinian DPW resident department head in order for them to implement their zero waste management plan and efficiently operate the solid waste transfer station.

“Although we have lobbied to transfer this authority through legislation, we have been unsuccessful in our efforts,” said Aldan, adding that he is asking the committee to once again insert this provision in the fiscal year 2024 budget bill so Tinian can finally budget for the operations of the transfer station and resolve some their solid waste management concerns.

The most important issue facing the municipality, Aldan said, focuses on providing the municipality the authority to manage their financial resources so they can efficiently manage their operations, projects, and programs.

Essentially, he said, what he is asking is to reinstate municipal imprest accounts and that operating funds be transferred to the Tinian Department of Finance’s imprest account at the beginning of every month to allow them direct control and management of vendor payments. An online definition describes an imprest system as a form of financial accounting, with the most common being petty cash—a reserved amount that is regularly replenished.

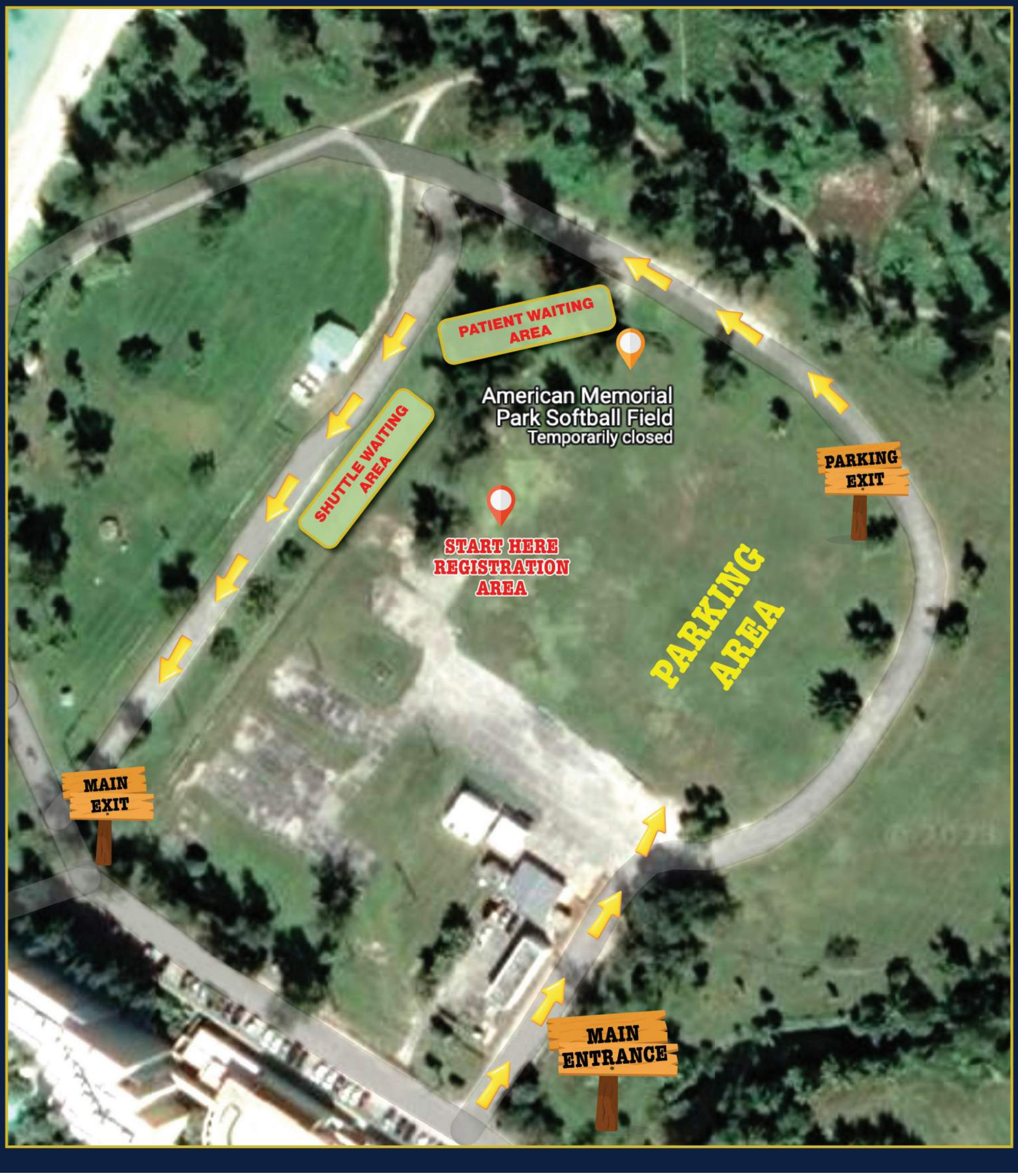
Aldan noted that he is only requesting the transfer of funds for operations and local appropriations—not personnel. He pointed out that he is not asking to create a new division or policy, but to allow Tinian Department of Finance employees on Tinian to be given the same authority as their Saipan counterparts in order to eliminate excessive delays, confusions, and conflicts within their procurement and financial systems.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

WELLNESS MISSION 2023

SAIPAN, TINIAN, ROTA



THAAD/patriot training exercise set on Tinian and Rota

To exercise emerging capabilities, the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense battery assigned to the defense of Guam is deploying a THAAD Remote Launch package consisting of one THAAD launcher along with one patriot launcher, and associated personnel and equipment to Rota and Tinian. The system will be deployed to the military leased area in the CNMI from July 13, 2023, to July 18, 2023.

A C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 15th Wing based out of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawai'i will move the equipment from Andersen Air Force Base in Guam to Rota and Tinian islands. The equipment, which does not have any munitions inside of them, will only be on the two islands for the duration of the exercise.

This operation will allow the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command to gather valuable data and inform future deployments of Remote Launch packages throughout the theater.

The THAAD/Patriot Remote Launch is a recently developed capability that allows remote launchers to operate while geographically separated from its Tactical Fire Control Center and radar array. This expands the 94th AAMDC area of defense and allows commanders greater flexibility in deploying the system.

The Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs Office would like to emphasize that this is not a permanent relocation of equipment and that the equipment will not have munitions on board.

STAFF SGT. DIVINE COX

File shows U.S. Air Force airmen from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, loading a Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, assigned to Task Force Talon, equipment onto a C-17 Globemaster III during Operation Talon Lightning on Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, March 4, 2022.

The 94th AAMDC and Joint Region Marianas are dedicated to the defense and safety of our citizens and allies in the Indo-Pacific region. **(Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawai'i and Joint Region Marianas, Guam)**

UOG wins awards for 70th Anniversary Museum Exhibit

The University of Guam recently won national and international awards for its 70th Anniversary Exhibit held at the Guam Museum last year.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education Circle of Excellence Award presented UOG with two Gold Awards for the exhibit in the Special Events, In- Person Multi-Day Events category and in the Design/ Environmental Graphics category.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS

The National Association of Government Communicators presents the University of Guam with a Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Award for its 70th Anniversary Museum Exhibit at the 2023 Communications School in Portland, Oregon. UOG won first place in the "Special Purpose Product" category and second place awards in the "Print Display" and "Special Event or Conference" categories. From left: Jonas Macapinlac, UOG chief marketing and communications officer; Tabitha Clark, NAGC president, and Jackie Hanson, UOG extension associate III.

Judges: Concept could serve as a model

"The panel had not seen an experience like this in the past and was inspired by the concept," according to CASE's description of the award. "Judges felt this concept could serve as a model for other institutions and is an excellent platform for giving exposure to the institution's message and voice."

In 2023, teams from 583 institutions in nearly 22 countries entered the CASE awards, submitting 4,021 entries in 96 categories for magazines and other publications, fundraising campaigns, alumni initiatives and other special events, marketing, leadership, video, and more.

To learn more about the two CASE awards, go to: https://www.case.org/awards/circle-excellence/2023/70th-anniversary-museum-exhibit

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Part of the University of Guam's 70th Anniversary Museum Exhibit is seen at the Senator Antonio M. Palomo Guam Museum and Chamorro Educational Facility in Hagåtña in August 2022. Nearly 2,500 visited the exhibit.

Government communicator awards

UOG's anniversary exhibit also won first place in the "Special Purpose Product" category of the National Association of Government Communicators Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards and second place awards in the "Print Display" and "Special Event or Conference" categories. The awards were given in April 2023 in Portland, Oregon.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Guests experience the University of Guam's 70th Anniversary Museum Exhibit as it offers interactive displays at the Senator Antonio M. Palomo Guam Museum and Chamorro Educational Facility in Hagåtña in August 2022.

NAGC awards program recognizes superior government communication products and those who produce them. To learn more about the NAGC Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards, go to https://nagc.com/page/2023-award-winners.

The exhibit allowed Guam residents to learn about 70 years of UOG's history in an interactive 3,000-square-foot museum space at the Sen. Antonio M. Palomo Guam Museum and Chamorro Educational Facility in Hagåtña. The exhibit drew almost 2,500 guests including more than 700 students and raised $10,000 for the UOG Endowment Foundation.

"Our 70th Anniversary Exhibit was produced and coordinated by teams across the University, said UOG acting president Anita Borja Enriquez. "These awards recognize that the rich history of UOG and the work we produce are exceptional among our peers in government and in higher education."

Virtual tour

The 70th Anniversary Exhibit closed in October 2022, but it lives on in an online virtual tour. Check it out at: https://url.uog.edu/UOG-70th-virtual-exhibit **(UOG)**

USS *John Finn* departs Saipan after commemorative port visit

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Nathan Thies, from Chicago, talks with Senior Chief Logistics Specialist Levar Harry, from San Diego, during a menotorship expo aboard Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113), June 26.

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Senior Chief Gunner's Mate Robert Williams, from Jacksonville, Florida, and Command Master Chief James Butler, from Hebron, Maryland, Sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) collect trash during an environmental cleanup event during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 3.

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) collect trash during an environmental cleanup event during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 3.

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Quartermaster 3rd Class Daniel Reyes-Muniz, from Naguabo, Puerto Rico, and Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Titilayo Kayode, from Seattle—both sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113)—collect trash during an environmental cleanup event during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 3.

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) collect trash during an environmental cleanup event during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 3.

By SAMANTHA OBLANDER
Commander, Task Force 71/Destroyer Squadron 15

SAIPAN—The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) departed Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands last July 6 after a scheduled port visit.

The port visit provided an opportunity for the crew of *John Finn* to enjoy the culture and represent the U.S. Navy's commitment to security presence in the Pacific.

"Saipan was a perfect location for the hard-working Sailors of USS *John Finn* to enjoy the July 4th holiday," said Capt. Walter Mainor, commander of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15. "Destroyer Squadron 15 and *John Finn* want to extend our deep appreciation for the warm welcome and great hospitality our sailors received here. The islands provide an important regional base for our forces operating across the Pacific. Port visits like this one help extend our reach and highlight our commitment to strategic presence in the region."

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Lt. Gage Gormley, from Philadelphia, and Senior Chief Fire Controlman Ricardo Gonzalez, from San Diego, render salutes as sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) march in a Liberation Day parade during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 4.

During the port visit, *John Finn* sailors had an opportunity to experience the hospitality, rich history and all that Saipan has to offer.

"This port visit is a tremendous opportunity for the *John Finn* crew to express strategic presence in the region, celebrate Liberation Day and highlight the value of Saipan and the Northern Mariana Islands for our forward-deployed units," said Cmdr. Matthew Hays, commanding officer of USS *John Finn*. "This location is key for our team as we replenish resources and continue operations to promote peace and stability throughout the Indo-Pacific region."

Over the course of the port visit, the crew welcomed Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, commander, Joint Region Marianas and Lt. Gov. David Atapang and Gov. Arnold Palacios of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands aboard *John Finn*, conducted a cleanup of American Memorial Park, and marched in Saipan's Liberation Day parade.

John Finn is forward-deployed to Commander, Task Force 71, U.S. 7th Fleet's principal surface force in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. CTF 71 is responsible for the readiness, tactical and administrative responsibilities for forward-deployed Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers as well as any surface unit conducting independent operations in the region. Navy's 7th Fleet is the largest forward-deployed fleet and routinely operates and interacts with 35 maritime nations while conducting missions to preserve and protect critical regional partnerships.

MC2 SAMANTHA OBLANDER

Sailors from Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) march in a Liberation Day parade during the ship's port visit to Saipan, July 4.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Student loan freeze didn't help borrowers shed debt

President Joe Biden is already scheming to get around last week's Supreme Court ruling that invalidated his effort to unilaterally make billions in student loan debt disappear. If Plan B involves more executive branch legerdemain not authorized by the Constitution—the details remain murky—expect another legal challenge.

In the meantime, the administration should consider whether the 40-month "pause" on loan payments—implemented during the height of COVID and extended nine times—succeeded in easing the financial burden that hit many borrowers during the pandemic. At least one study finds the opposite.

A University of Chicago analysis published last month found that student loan recipients who stopped payments increased their overall debt burden because they "sharply increased mortgage, auto and credit card borrowing." On average, those who took advantage of the payment moratorium added an additional $1,500 in consumer debt.

"We show that borrowers used the new liquidity to increase borrowing on credit cards, mortgages and auto loans rather than avoid delinquencies," researchers from the university's Becker Friedman Institute for Economics concluded, finding that "perhaps paradoxically, temporary student debt relief leads to higher overall household debt levels and larger future debt burdens."

The purpose of the payment pause was to provide a breather to borrowers struggling during COVID, not to encourage them to rack up more debt. In fact, going deeper into the red too often compounds financial ills. Indeed, The New York Times reported, "In recent months, the (University of Chicago) paper found, those borrowers have started to become delinquent on their loans at higher rates—raising the concern that the resumption of student loan payments could drive more of them into default."

But whose fault is that? Why doesn't a borrower have some personal responsibility to make good on his or her obligations?

In addition, the study doesn't even address the fact that borrowers who haven't made payments for more than three years are now that much further away from getting out from under their student loans.

To be sure, a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic and the economic havoc and uncertainty it wrought called for unusual measures. A student loan freeze was a reasonable short-term response. But to keep such a policy in place for months—even years—after the economy bounced back was an expensive mistake. Not only are many borrowers worse off than before the pause, the American taxpayers are out $5 billion for every month Mr. Biden extended the payment suspension. It was lose-lose.

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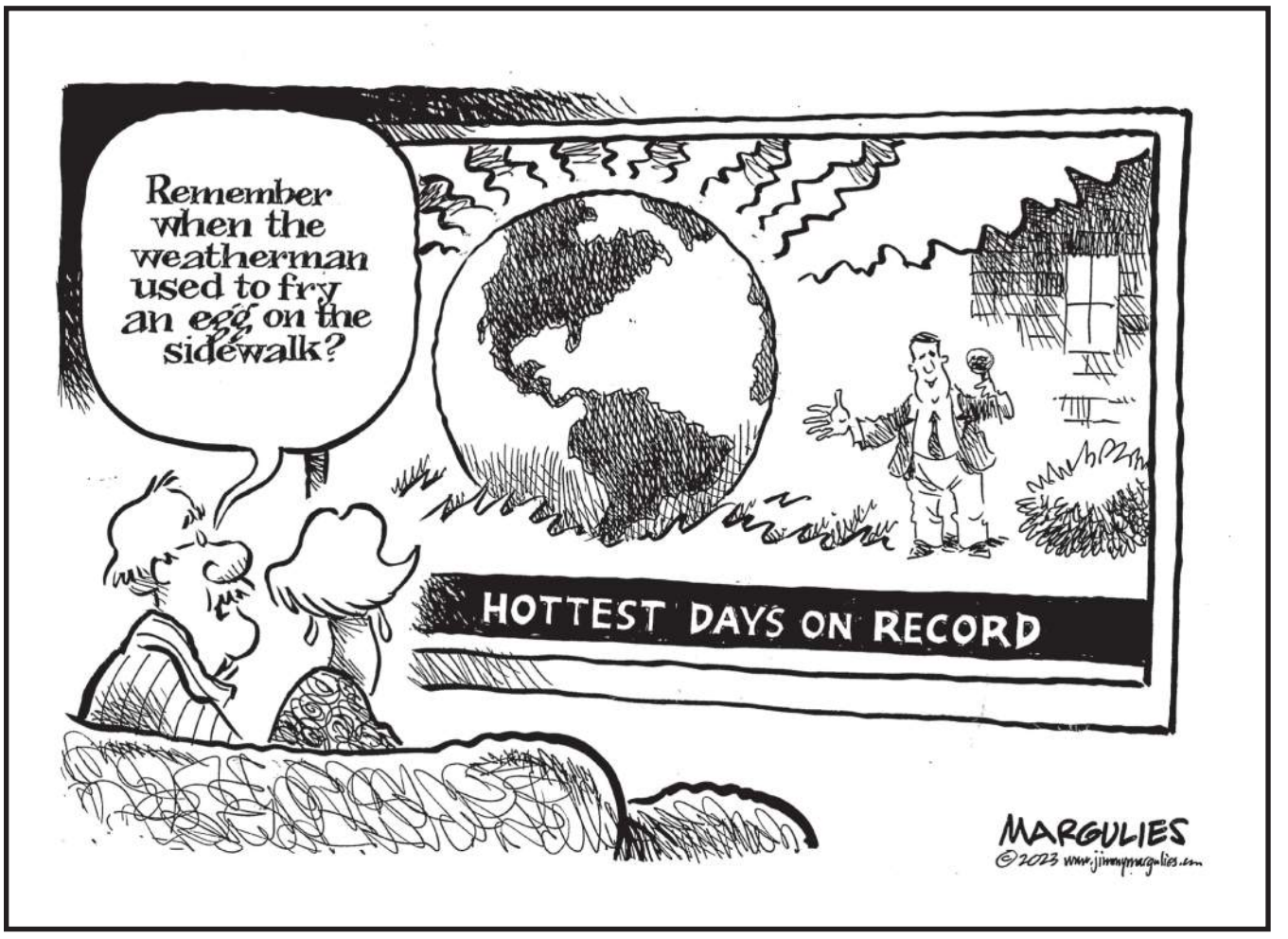
Remember when the weatherman used to fry an egg on the sidewalk?
HOTTEST DAYS ON RECORD
MARGULIES
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How should you offer help to someone you perceive as disabled?

By MEG ZUCKER
Los Angeles Times

Meg Zucker is vice president and U.S. head of anti-money laundering and financial crime at the Royal Bank of Canada, the author of Born Extraordinary: Empowering Children with Differences and Disabilities *and founder and president of the Don't Hide It, Flaunt it non-profit.*

Whenever I leave home, I am constantly subjected to acts of kindness. I know that's supposed to be a good thing. But throughout my life, it's been more complicated. Many strangers who encounter me and my family simply can't help themselves. On any given day I might be asked if I need help bagging my groceries, signing a receipt or even unbuttoning my pants before I enter a stall in a public restroom.

I was born with a rare genetic condition called ectrodactyly that I passed on to two of our three children. I have one finger on each hand, shortened forearms and one toe on each tiny stump of a foot. Our sons Ethan and Charlie—but not their sister, Savanna—inherited their own version of it. Together the three of us have a total of 18 digits. Go figure.

These public interactions, while often mundane and well-meaning, have undeniably impacted my sense of self. But having our sons helped shift my view of what it means to live with something society considers atypical.

Growing up I was naturally gregarious and social, yet no one seemed to get me. Strangers would stare, so I recoiled. Most interactions otherwise were either offers of help or glances filled with pity. Despite my lot in life, my parents resisted fear and raised me to pursue and succeed at my passions. I was living my life in my own version of normal, capable of accomplishing anything and everything within my means.

Because of my physical achievements and fierce independence, offers of help bruised my ego or even angered me. On occasion I responded by embodying a praying mantis: ready, willing and able to bite someone's head off. It didn't matter if the person had the best of intentions or the assistance made my life easier. I'd react with a defensive hostility I'm embarrassed to confess.

For example, if someone asked if I needed help putting apples on the conveyor belt at a store's checkout, I'd growl, "Why? Do you need help putting your food on the belt?" I've also been snarky to an airport employee who ushered me to security so I could avoid a long line. It made no difference that I was saved from missing my flight—that type of kindness was reliably met with the best evil eye I could muster.

Even when I was in a better mood, I resisted these gestures because I felt like they undermined my hard-earned physical independence. I was raised to believe that my most significant limitations were in my mind, namely if I didn't believe in myself. So to accept any sort of special treatment made me feel like an impostor or even a fraud who was undeservedly taking advantage of a system designed to help people in need.

But then I had Ethan and Charlie. With them in the picture I grew acutely self-aware. It became my duty to teach them we have a societal role to play—we should respond graciously to offers of assistance, not because we always need it, but because others might. If I got angry, that same person I was responding to might later resist helping someone who truly needed it. I finally learned to swallow my pride and stopped lashing out against acts of kindness, lest my children follow that bad example.

While it took me years to navigate all of this, thankfully neither of our sons has been inclined to repeat my poor behavior or be fazed by all the attention. Recently, I received a WhatsApp message from Ethan during his semester abroad in Barcelona, Spain. Before returning he decided to backpack through Europe. From Paris he texted: "Hey Mom! I got in for free at the Musee d'Orsay AND skipped the line. Ectrodactyly perks!" Indeed—sometimes we should allow ourselves to embrace the perks.

Still, people who are perceived as different or disabled like us are not the only ones who have something to learn about public interactions. When I am asked how I wish others would behave toward someone like me, who appears physically limited, my answer is simple: Don't immediately rush for the save. Instead, take a breath and observe: Am I struggling and looking around for help? Or do I seem to be managing on my terms?

As much as I've evolved when it comes to well-meaning strangers, I hope for more understanding from those offering help, too. Although it might feel counterintuitive, taking that moment to challenge your assumptions about what we're capable of helps us in a more critical way. It preserves our dignity—a true act of kindness.

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As we celebrated our independence, Ukrainians fought and died to keep theirs

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member of the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer*, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

As we celebrated the Fourth of July with hot dogs and fireworks, mourners gathered at Kyiv's famous St. Michael's Golden-Domed Cathedral. They were paying last respects to one of Ukraine's most noted young writers.

Victoria Amelina, 37, was fatally wounded by a Russian missile strike on July 1 on a large, well-known pizza restaurant in Kramatorsk, Ukraine. At the time, it was filled with journalists, humanitarian aid workers, local families, and probably some soldiers taking time out from the front lines. How like the Russians to bomb a pizza place.

I didn't know Amelina, but have several Ukrainian friends who did, including one who was at her hospital bedside as she lay in an irreversible coma.

I'm writing about her, not to guilt-trip those who enjoyed their backyard barbecue this week, but because she inspired such admiration from her peers. She had paused her successful literary career to investigate and document war crimes in areas liberated by Ukrainian forces from Russian occupation.

We should look to Ukrainian heroes like Amelina for inspiration every time we get queasy about the possibility that a certain Putin-admirer might be re-elected in 2024. Her struggle to protect Ukrainian democracy was far more existential than ours, but she never gave up.

"Her death was a profound shock to everyone in the literary community," I was told on WhatsApp by Tetyana Ogarkova, a Ukrainian literary scholar and journalist. "Victoria was very loved, very modest, and independent. She could have stayed in Canada (where her father lived) but she chose to come back."

Originally an IT specialist, Amelina could also have left Ukraine for lucrative work in Europe, but she stayed to battle the occupiers with the written word and with her investigations. She joined up with the Ukrainian human rights organization Truth Hounds, which has worked for the past eight years to document human rights violations in Ukraine, and elsewhere in areas once controlled by Moscow.

According to the Kyiv Independent newspaper, the Prosecutor General's office had recorded over 80,000 war crimes by March that were allegedly committed by the Russian military in Ukraine. They ranged from over 400 civilians whose bodies were strewn in the streets in Bucha to the bombing of a theater containing hundreds of women and children in Mariupol, and on and on.

Even as I write, Ukrainian officials fear that Russian soldiers may set off mines at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which they occupy, and blame the blast on Ukraine, with the goal of stoking global hysteria about another Chernobyl.

In theory, with the plant mostly shuttered and the core heavily strengthened, the mines could explode without releasing large clouds of radiation. Or maybe not. Either way, Vladimir Putin is indifferent to civilian deaths—whether Ukrainian or Russian—and the West has not been loud enough in warning him of the repercussions for such a crime.

Putin has already gotten away with the huge ecological war crime of blowing up the Nova Kakhovka Dam, also occupied by Russian troops. While there is no conclusive proof that Russia is to blame, the evidence overwhelmingly points to Moscow.

In order for war crimes cases to eventually be legally prosecuted, painstaking documentation is needed. In occupied areas, such as the dam and the nuclear power plant, that evidence can't be collected right now.

However, in liberated territory the work of documentation is endless. "With Viktoria's work for Truth Hounds, she never stopped travelling," Ogarkova recalled, even to places still under shelling. "She was very brave."

In one famous case, when investigating the disappearance of her colleague, the celebrated children's literature writer Volodymyr Vakulenko, Amelina travelled to his parents' village to search for his diary. He had managed to bury it near a cherry tree before the Russians dragged him away. She and his father unearthed it. (Vakulenko's buried remains were eventually found with two bullet holes).

Thanks to Amelina, the diary is now housed in the Kharkiv Literary Museum. His final entry ends, "Everything will be Ukraine! I believe in victory."

"She died on July 1 which was his birthday," Ogarkova told me. "This links two writers assassinated by the Russians."

Yet even as Amelina investigated war crimes, she found time to write moving poetry about the war and also had plans to write a book about women at war writing about war.

She made a spontaneous trip to Kramatorsk to accompany three prominent Colombian writers and was dining with them when the missile cut her down. Twelve others died, including several young restaurant staff and twin 14-year-old girls out for pizza with their dad.

On the weekend before her death, Amelina read from her works at an international literary festival in Kyiv. Ogarkova's husband played piano accompaniment in the background.

Some of her lines: "At night I looked at fireballs in the sky from my balcony in Kyiv and listened to explosions. I went to sleep without checking the news. The war is when you can no longer follow all news and cry about all neighbors who died instead of you a couple of miles away. till, I want to not forget to learn the names."

Remember the name Victoria Amelina. It should inspire us all.

We never use torture, nuclear weapons or cluster munitions, unless we need to

By JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Texas and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.

No terrain is more difficult to defend than the moral high ground. As a rule, however, America has done a decent job of it. We are not the sort of people who use torture, nuclear weapons or cluster munitions. Unless we need to.

Consider torture. It's illegal in the United States to torture another human being, but it's incontrovertible that American armed forces used torture in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War to extract information and to terrorize and brutalize Philippine insurgents. Waterboarding was popular (yes, waterboarding is torture). In fact, torture thrives in war.

After 9/11, the George W. Bush administration skirted the law (and tortured the English language) by calling torture "enhanced interrogation." But, in fact, suspects were tortured at Guantanamo and at so-called black sites located in countries not as scrupulous about torture as we would like to think we are.

But whenever I've argued against any use of torture, someone always brings up this simple hypothetical case: A terrorist has planted a nuclear bomb in a major American city. Its location can be determined only by the use of torture. The clock is ticking. Would torture be justified in order to locate and disarm the bomb?

I don't have a good answer for that question. Nor can I gainsay the positions of those who argue that torture is justified in such a case. All I really know is that, yes, we would use it.

Nuclear weapons? We abhor the use of these incredibly powerful and indiscriminate weapons, but is there any doubt that, if the stakes were high enough, we would use them? Indeed, we're the only country that has.

This is the context in which to consider President Joe Biden's decision last week to supply the Ukrainian military with cluster munitions, the insidious weapons that have been banned by more than a hundred countries, but not by the United States, Ukraine and Russia.

Cluster munitions are long-range artillery shells that break open in midair to release up to 72 highly destructive bomblets that scatter over an area larger than a football field and wreak havoc on armor and personnel.

The problem is that cluster munitions have a "dud rate" that can range from under 3% to over 40%, which means that many unexploded bomblets are left strewn across the landscape. Thousands of civilians, many of them children, have been killed or injured by the bomblets long after the wars have ended.

Biden's decision was controversial and politically risky. Republicans generally supported sending cluster munitions to Ukraine, but some Democrats resisted.

Rep. Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania asserted that victory for Ukraine is essential, but that it "cannot come at the expense of our American values and thus democracy itself…I challenge the notion that we should employ the same tactics Russia is using, blurring the lines of moral high ground."

Houlahan's point is a good one, but in real-world terms, it embodies an ideological and moral purity that we may not be able to afford.

My generation's war was Vietnam, a hopelessly ill-advised conflict that birthed the hippie subculture slogan: "Suppose they gave a war and nobody came." Unfortunately, this aspirational notion never stood a chance in the face of humanity's enduring instinct for war. In fact, few activities are more foundational to humankind than fighting each other, and few aspirations are more futile than the abolition of war.

I hope, however, that we keep trying to talk more and fight less. In the meantime, there are values worth fighting for, and democracy's conflict with totalitarianism represents one of them. But often there is no nonviolent, humane way to defend democratic values without sinking to the level of brutality that autocrats are willing to employ without a second thought.

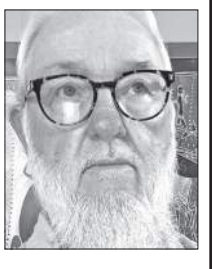
So we will send cluster munitions to the Ukrainians, and very likely civilians and children will suffer from unexploded bomblets for years to come.

This is not the way it should be; unfortunately, history suggests that this is the way it always is.

Mudita Mantra With Mirth in Mind

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

Mudita means "sympathetic joy" in Sanskrit. It is the happiness one enjoys for others. In Buddhism mudita is "the ability to spontaneously and sincerely participate in another's good fortune as if it were your own." A mantra is a hymn or portion of a text in Hinduism. It is chanted or intoned as an incantation or prayer.

A Midsummer Morning Mudita Mantra

I have mudita for these things, days, and all four seasons
On three-day holidays which sometimes on Monday end
All those who disregard online trolls that insult and offend
Wednesday hump day with the weekend round the bend
Thursdays when my neighbors have a helping hand to lend
Fridays getting beer and other things for a party weekend
Saturday house chores done so no more clean ups to tend
A day to rest up with a snoozing Sunday siesta to mend.

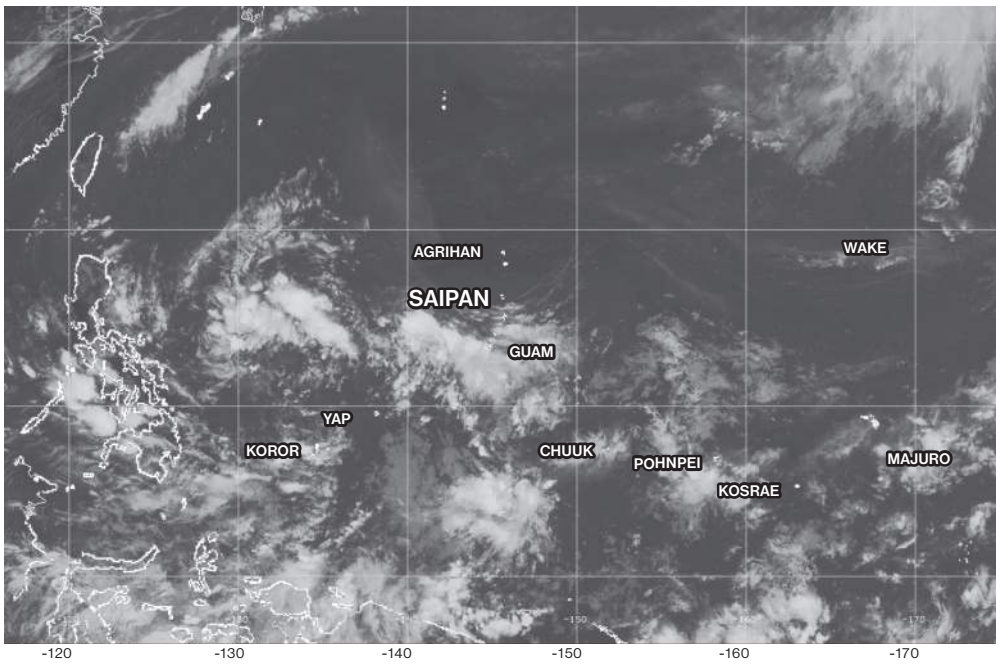
Concrete thinkers abstract thoughts begin to comprehend
Korean grandparents enjoying tropical fruit and juice blend
Loose chickens, goats, pigs, and cows finally get penned
Every day during the Xmas holidays making a new friend
Mudita for all who once seemed to be easily offended
Who now bring us laughter before each day is ended.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny	Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
87° 79°	86° 78°	87° 78°	88° 78°	88° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:34 AM, TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar showing increasing clouds and showers across the Marianas this morning, with lightning detected south of the coastal waters. Ipan buoys and latest altimetry are indicating combined seas 5 to 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	82° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	87° / 81°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:54 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	1:06 AM	2:07 PM	-
Thursday	1:48 AM	3:02 PM	-
Friday	2:33 AM	3:58 PM	-
Saturday	3:22 AM	4:53 PM	-
Sunday	4:13 AM	5:47 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	58° / 51°
Beijing	Rain/Thunder	77° / 73°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	89° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	72° / 55°
Los Angeles	Sunny	86° / 63°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 80°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	63° / 49°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	91° / 81°
New York	Sunny	90° / 73°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	90° / 78°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	80° / 60°
Busan	Scattered Thunderstorms	79° / 74°
Rome	Sunny	96° / 74°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	90° / 69°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	66° / 52°
Seoul	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 75°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	96° / 79°
Washington, DC	Sunny	91° / 71°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
2:33 AM	High Tide	2.13
10:03 AM	Low Tide	0.34
4:55 PM	High Tide	1.68
9:32 PM	Low Tide	1.31

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1, 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3467	3:00AM	7:10AM	Daily up to July 20
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
TW9308	4:45AM	8:45AM	1, 5 July 17 to Aug 18
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174 via Guam	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3468	8:20PM	1:50AM+1	Daily up to July 19
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	10:00PM	3:45AM+1	6, 4 July 23 to Aug 20
7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

AK announces new leadership for Morrico Equipment, AK Saipan

TAMUNING, Guam—Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape Company, announced the retirement of Torgun Smith, vice president and general manager for Morrico Equipment. Smith's journey with Morrico spans an impressive 30 years, during which he played an integral role in the founding of Morrico Equipment, along with Alan and Ross Morrison. Smith was instrumental in Morrico's growth, success, and reputation as a trusted industry leader in Guam and Micronesia.

Alex Yap, president, Guam & Saipan for Atkins Kroll, noted, "As Torgun embarks on this new chapter in his life, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for his exceptional service and numerous accomplishments. His unwavering commitment and passion for getting the job done have set a remarkable example for us all. Torgun will always be part of our AK and Morrico families, and we wish him great happiness and success."

Lesh

AK is proud to announce that Joel Lesh has been promoted to vice president and general manager of Morrico Equipment as of July 1, 2023. Lesh returns to Guam after serving as the AK Saipan vice president and general manager, a role he held since February 2021. Before that, Lesh was the AK Guam Aftersales director.

"Joel has been an invaluable AK team member for six years, consistently demonstrating exceptional leadership skills, deep industry knowledge, and a strong commitment to our success," President Yap added. "This allows for a seamless transition as he leads the future successes for Morrico Equipment."

Atkins Kroll Appoints Julie Lee as interim VP and GM for Saipan Operations

AK also announced the appointment of Julie Lee as the interim vice president and general manager for Atkins Kroll Saipan effective July 10, 2023. Lee joined AK in 2006 as financial controller and went on to become the finance director overseeing AK Guam, AK Saipan, and Morrico Equipment. She will continue to oversee the business's automotive finance and insurance and serve as vice president and treasurer of the AK board of directors and a 401K planning committee member. Lee is a graduate of Seattle University and a former auditor with Deloitte and Touche.

» Torgun Smith retires after three decades of service in heavy equipment industry

Shermah Santos will serve as interim Finance director for Atkins Kroll and Morrico Equipment effective July 10, 2023. Santos joined AK in 2017 and has been general manager of Finance since 2021. She holds a BA and MBA in Accounting from California State University, San Bernardino.

Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape company, is the leading distributor of vehicles in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Micronesia enabling it to provide a full range of products and services in the region. Atkins Kroll is Guam's oldest corporation established in 1914. In 1967 Atkins Kroll expanded service to the CNMI. Today AK represents Toyota, Lexus, BMW, Chevrolet, Toyota Rent A Car, Avis, Budget and Payless Rental Car, and AC Delco brands. In December 2021 Atkins Kroll acquired Morrico Equipment, one of Guam's largest heavy equipment dealerships representing Freightliner, Hyundai Construction Equipment, Kohler Power Systems, Rosenbauer Fire Trucks and Thomas Built School Buses. Morrico Equipment operates new and used heavy equipment sales, rental, parts, diesel fuel delivery, Trashco Guam, and specialized diesel repair service to Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. ***(PR)***

Experts: Be wary of scams as Amazon Prime Day kicks off

AP

An Amazon Prime logo appears on the side of a delivery van as it departs an Amazon Warehouse location in Dedham, Mass., Oct. 1, 2020.

NEW YORK (AP)—Amazon Prime Day is here. And, once again, experts are warning consumers of scams.

Scams targeting online shoppers—often by impersonating companies like Amazon and other major retailers—are nothing new. But phishing attempts increase amid busy spending seen during significant sales events—from Black Friday to, of course, Prime Day, according to the Better Business Bureau.

"This is a huge moment on the retail calendar," Josh Planos, vice president of communications and public relations at the Better Business Bureau, told The Associated Press. "And because of that, it represents an enormous opportunity for a scammer, con artist or even just an unethical business or organization to capitalize on the moment and separate folks from their hard-earned money."

Prime Day, a two-day discount event, kicks off on Tuesday and runs through Wednesday. In guidance published last week, the Better Business Bureau reminded consumers to watch out for lookalike websites, too-good-to-be-true social media ads, unsolicited emails or calls and more near Prime Day and other sales events this month beyond Amazon's.

Scott Knapp, director of worldwide buyer risk prevention at Amazon, identifies two scams that the company has seen in recent years around Prime Day: Prime membership and order confirmation hoaxes.

Last year, for example, people reported getting unsolicited calls or emails saying that there was something wrong with their Prime membership. Then, they were asked for payment information, like a credit card, and sometimes login credentials as well, Knapp explained—adding that Amazon "or any reputable business" wouldn't ask for those details in that way.

Urging consumers to confirm an order they didn't place is also a common tactic at this time of year, he adds. Scammers might pick something expensive, like a smartphone, to get attention—and again ask for payment information or send a malicious link.

"We sell a lot of stuff and people know the (Amazon) name," Knapp told the AP. "Bad actors try to take advantage of that."

Of course, there's loads of additional scams out there—it's hard to identify more specifics for this year's Prime Day before it begins. Still, experts add, scams will often iterate year after year.

"Typically, the bones remain the same," Planos said, pointing to repeating fake delivery scams, email phishing and more. "It's always a ploy to separate consumers from (their) personal and payment information."

Twitter users, influencers, others flocking to new Threads app

NEW YORK (AP)—Celebrities, lawmakers, brands and everyday social media users are flocking to Meta's freshly minted app Threads to connect with their followers, including many Twitter refugees tired of the drama surrounding Elon Musk's raucous oversight of that platform.

But the real question is: Will they stay?

Instagram head Adam Mosseri said in a Threads post Monday that in the five days since its launch, 100 million people have signed up for Threads, which was rolled out as a companion app to Instagram.

Ann Coleman is among them. The 50-year-old, who lives in Baltimore, said she joined Threads after hearing about the platform from a comedian she follows on social media. She said she loves Twitter and has been using it for more than 10 years. She even met her husband on there.

But Coleman, who is politically progressive, has been looking to switch to a new platform because of Musk's political views and changes he's made to Twitter, like upending its verification system. She previously joined the decentralized social network Mastodon, but found it a bit confusing to use.

She said she likes Threads but wishes she could easily follow all her Twitter friends there. Threads gives Instagram users the option to automatically follow the same accounts they do on the photo-sharing app, which makes it easier for active Instagram users to replicate a similar type of engagement on Threads. But others starting from the ground up will have to do more work.

"If I'm going to leave Twitter entirely, I'm going to have to try and find some of these people" from Twitter, Coleman said.

While she said she has her own concerns about Meta—specifically pointing to the Cambridge Analytica privacy breach, among other things—"it's not with the depth of concern that I do with Musk."

Michael Evancoe, 28, said he hasn't used Twitter much since his personal page was suspended years ago for what the platform attributed to violations of its rules on spam. Evancoe, who now works in production, said he agrees with some of the changes Musk has been making on Twitter and he created a new account earlier this year. But he wasn't able to gain many followers or interactions.

He joined Threads last week, and says he's been able to interact more with other users. But he hopes that Meta does not moderate the platform overly aggressively.

"I think that would be a deterrent to both interest and engagement as well," Evancoe said.

For its part, Meta has said it will moderate using Instagram's content guidelines. In the past few days, the company has been positioning the much-hyped platform as a new digital town square that's a less toxic version of Twitter, with some executives indicating their aim isn't to replace Twitter but to offer something more palatable to a vast array of users.

"The goal is to create a public square for communities on Instagram that never really embraced Twitter and for communities on Twitter (and other platforms) that are interested in a less angry place for conversations," Mosseri said Friday.

In the first two full days that Threads was broadly available—Thursday and Friday of last week—traffic on Twitter was down 5% compared with the same period a week ago, and down 11% compared with the same period a year ago, according to the web analytics company SimilarWeb. But it also said Twitter traffic has experienced an overall decline even in the absence of Threads.

To Jennifer Billinson, a professor of media studies at Nazareth University in New York, the first days of Threads have highlighted a potential culture clash -- specifically one between Twitter refugees and what is likely a much larger number of people just clicking over from Instagram.

The idea that Threads will just become a Twitter clone, she says, is running headlong into the reality that the Twitterites are going to be "vastly outnumbered" on the new platform by those from Instagram, which has more than 2 billion monthly users. By comparison, Twitter has more than 237 million daily users, according to the most recent figures from the company's earnings report last year.

Among other things, those used to the more abrasive culture of Twitter could easily annoy more laid-back Instagram users. Of course, such tensions might be alleviated by potential platform changes that give people more control over what they'll see in their Threads feed. At the moment, users are largely at the mercy of the Threads algorithm.

Despite the influx of users, Brendan Gahan, partner and chief social officer at the creative agency Mekanism, stressed it's too early to know how successful Threads will be. He further questions whether the rapid growth of Threads is even a good thing, pointing out some other successful platforms began with a focused approach and expanded more gradually.

There's also the question of how influencers will use Threads and whether they can replicate the same following as on other platforms. Most notably, Jimmy Donaldson—a popular YouTube video maker who goes by MrBeast— has already amassed more than 4 million followers on Threads.

Nation

U.S. President Joe Biden, left, and Britain's King Charles III meet inside Windsor Castle, England, Monday July 10, 2023.

Biden, King Charles III zero in on generational challenge of CLIMATE CHANGE

By SEUNG MIN KIM, JILL LAWLESS and CHRIS MEGERIAN
Associated Press

WINDSOR, England (AP)—President Joe Biden and King Charles III, two leaders who waited decades to reach the pinnacle of their careers, used their first meeting in those roles Monday to zero in on the generational challenge of climate change, prodding private companies to do more to bolster clean energy in developing countries.

The meticulously choreographed gathering at Windsor Castle injected substance into the type of encounter between president and monarch that historically has been more about ceremony. After the arrival formalities, Biden and Charles participated in a climate-focused roundtable with officials from the financial and philanthropic sectors. John Kerry, the U.S. envoy on climate, also attended.

The 74-year-old Charles, who was crowned in May, has long fought to protect wildlife and battle climate change. Biden, for his part, identified climate change as one of the four crises he was determined to confront as president. He signed a sweeping legislative package last year that includes nearly $375 billion in climate-related incentives.

Biden, 80, last had formal talks with Charles, then prince, at the COP26 U.N. climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2021. The U.S. president also attended the state funeral of Charles's mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in September as well as a reception for heads of state at Buckingham Palace the night before the service. Biden did not attend Charles's coronation, sending first lady Jill Biden instead.

Jake Sullivan, the White House national security adviser, said the president has "huge respect" for the king's commitment on the climate issue in particular. He said Charles has been a "clarion voice" on climate and "someone who's mobilized action and effort."

Biden and Charles made sure to show off their still-developing friendship and warmth during the ceremonial arrival at Windsor Castle, outside London. After they shook hands, Biden put his hand on Charles's arm, then on the king's back as they approached a viewing platform to inspect an honor guard. They appeared relaxed and cordial — a contrast to more formal encounters between past U.S. presidents and British royalty. Biden and Charles discussed climate, China and shared stories from the past during their visit, according to Sullivan.

The views of the late Queen Elizabeth II on politics and political issues were a closely guarded secret, and her meetings with world leaders were almost entirely ceremonial. Charles spent his decades as heir to the throne expressing opinions on issues from architecture to the environment, and has continued to take a keen interest in climate change now that he is king. However, neither he nor Biden spoke publicly at Windsor Castle.

Biden's royal visit was paired with his sixth meeting with the British prime minister since Rishi Sunak took office, The two discussed a range of global issues, including the war in Ukraine. Both nations are among the most stalwart defenders of Kyiv, and the United Kingdom has pushed the White House to take more aggressive steps in providing military aid to Ukraine.

Following his meetings with Charles and Sunak, Biden flew to Vilnius, Lithuania, for the annual NATO summit. Discussion about the war in Ukraine is expected to be front-and-center over two days of talks that begin Tuesday.

His talks with Charles were meant to highlight the so-called enduring "special relationship" between the U.S. and the U.K. When Biden declined to attend Charles's coronation, he promised the king in a phone call that he would visit soon.

Biden's meeting with Sunak at the prime minister's residence at 10 Downing St. included discussion about the U.S. president's decision this week to provide Ukraine with cluster munitions, a weapon that more than two-thirds of the members of the NATO military alliance have barred for their potential threat to civilian life.

Biden admin asks court to block order limiting contacts with social media

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The Biden administration asked a federal appeals court Monday to temporarily block a lower court's order limiting executive branch officials' discussions with social media companies about controversial online posts.

The request for an emergency stay was filed at the 5th U.S. District Court of Appeals shortly after U.S. District Judge Terry Doughty rejected an administration motion that he put his own July 4 order on hold. The order came in a lawsuit filed by Republican attorneys general in Louisiana and Missouri, as well as a conservative website owner and four individual critics of government COVID-19 policies.

The lawsuit claimed the administration, in effect, censored free speech by using threats of regulatory action or protection while pressuring companies to remove what it deemed misinformation. COVID-19 vaccines, legal issues involving President Joe Biden's son Hunter and election fraud allegations were among the topics spotlighted in the lawsuit.

Doughty was nominated to the federal bench by former President Donald Trump. His injunction blocked the Department of Health and Human Services, the FBI and multiple other government agencies and administration officials from meeting with or contacting social media companies for the purpose of "encouraging, pressuring, or inducing in any manner the removal, deletion, suppression, or reduction of content containing protected free speech."

Administration attorneys said in the motion filed at the 5th Circuit that Doughty's ruling was too broad and vague, and had the potential to chill government officials' speech on important matters. And they said Doughty failed to point to any evidence that the administration had made threats against social media companies to coerce them to take down posts.

"The district court identified no evidence suggesting that a threat accompanied any request for the removal of content. Indeed, the order denying the stay —presumably highlighting the ostensibly strongest evidence—referred to 'a series of public media statements,'" the administration said.

They asked that the 5th Circuit block Doughty's order while the case is pursued at the appeals court in New Orleans or, at minimum, grant a 10-day block of the order so the administration could prepare to go to the Supreme Court to seek a longer stay.

Larry Nassar stabbed by another inmate at federal prison

WASHINGTON (AP)—Disgraced sports doctor Larry Nassar, who was convicted of sexually abusing Olympic and college female gymnasts, was stabbed multiple times by another inmate at a federal prison in Florida that is experiencing staffing shortages.

The attack happened Sunday at United States Penitentiary Coleman, and Nassar was in stable condition on Monday, two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press.

One of the people said Nassar had been stabbed in the back and in the chest. The two officers guarding the unit where Nassar was held were working mandated overtime shifts because of staffing shortages, one of the people said.

The people were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the attack or the ongoing investigation and spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity.

Nassar is serving decades in prison for convictions in state and federal courts. He admitted sexually assaulting athletes when he worked at Michigan State University and at Indianapolis-based USA Gymnastics, which trains Olympians. Nassar also pleaded guilty in a separate case to possessing images of child sexual abuse.

The federal Bureau of Prisons has experienced significant staffing shortages in the last few years, an issue thrust into the spotlight in 2019 when the convicted financier Jeffrey Epstein took his own life at a federal jail in New York.

An Associated Press investigation in 2021 revealed nearly one third of federal correctional officer positions were vacant nationwide, forcing prisons to use cooks, teachers, nurses and other workers to guard inmates. The staffing shortages have hampered the response to emergencies at other prisons, including suicides.

Other AP investigations have revealed sexual abuse and criminal conduct, among other problems, at the Bureau of Prisons — the Justice Department's largest agency, with more than 30,000 employees, 158,000 inmates and an annual budget of about $8 billion.

The bureau's new leader, Colette Peters, was brought in last year to reform the crisis-plagued agency. She has vowed to reform archaic hiring practices and bring new transparency. But problems have persisted, as shown by the the recent suicide of Ted Kaczynski, known as the "Unabomber," at a federal lockup in North Carolina.

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

Myanmar violence, sea disputes to dominate ASEAN talks

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Myanmar's prolonged civil strife, tensions in the disputed South China Sea and concern over arms buildups in the region are expected to dominate the agenda when Southeast Asia's top diplomats gather for talks this week in Indonesia. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the U.S.-China rivalry will also be under the spotlight as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang participate as dialogue partners of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations foreign ministers in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui will not attend the ASEAN Regional Forum, an annual security meeting, Indonesian Foreign Ministry official Sidharto Suryodipuro told a news conference on Monday, without elaborating. It's also unclear who among the key figures in the world's most intractable conflicts will meet on the sidelines of the group's ministerial meetings. The top diplomats of ASEAN, which consists of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, will meet Tuesday and Wednesday before their Asian and Western counterparts join them in discussions on Thursday and Friday.

HK will ban more products from Japan if treated wastewater is discharged

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong's leader warned Tuesday that the city will ban marine products from "a large number prefectures" if Japan discharges treated radioactive wastewater into the sea. Chief Executive John Lee said in a press briefing that his government would err on the side of caution because the planned release of wastewater from the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean is an unprecedented exercise. He said he has to take the issue seriously because it affects not only the current population of Hong Kong but also the next generation. "The action we will take, if the exercise really starts, is that we will be banning a large number (of) prefectures' sea products," he said. But he did not name which prefectures and what products will be affected. A massive earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 destroyed the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant's cooling systems, causing three reactors to melt and releasing large amounts of radiation. The tanks storing the water used since the accident to cool the reactor cores will reach their capacity in early 2024. In 2021, Japan's government announced plans to gradually release the treated—but still slightly radioactive—water following its dilution to what it says are safe levels. Japanese officials say the water, currently stored in about a thousand tanks at the plant, needs to be removed to prevent accidental leaks in case of an earthquake and to make room for the plant's decommissioning.

Heavy rains cause flooding and mudslides in southwest Japan

TOKYO (AP)—Torrential rain pounded southwestern Japan, triggering floods and mudslides and leaving two people dead and at least six others missing, officials said Monday. Rain falling in the regions of Kyushu and Chugoku since the weekend caused flooding along many rivers, triggered mudslides, closed roads, disrupted trains and cut the water supply in some areas. The Japan Meteorological Agency issued an emergency heavy rain warning for Fukuoka and Oita prefectures on the southern main island of Kyushu, urging residents in riverside and hillside areas to take maximum caution. More than 1.7 million residents in vulnerable areas were urged to take shelter. The emergency warning was downgraded later Monday to a regular warning. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who is scheduled to attend a July 11-12 NATO summit in Lithuania, said he will make a final decision on whether to go after assessing the extent of damage Tuesday morning. "Either way, we will do our utmost to respond to the disaster by putting people's lives first," he said. Two people died and at least six others were missing, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency and prefectural officials. A man was found dead in a vehicle that fell into a swollen river in Yamaguchi prefecture. In the town of Soeda in Fukuoka prefecture, two people were buried by a mudslide. One was rescued alive but the other died, according to prefectural officials.

New Delhi schools close after monsoon floods kill at least 15

NEW DELHI (AP)—Schools in New Delhi were closed on Monday after heavy monsoon rains battered the Indian capital and caused landslides and flash floods in the country's north, killing at least 15 people over the last three days. The torrential rain over the weekend left parts of New Delhi overflowing with water that submerged roads and stranded residents. The northern hill states were the worst affected, with 10 people killed in flash floods and landslides in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand states, according to the Press Trust of India news agency. One person died in New Delhi and four were killed in the Indian-controlled section of Kashmir. Landslides triggered by the rains disrupted traffic on key highways in Uttarakhand, a tourist hill state in the Himalayas, prompting warnings for residents not to venture out of their homes unless necessary. Authorities used helicopters to rescue people while bridges and houses were swept away in neighboring Himachal Pradesh.

At least 1 killed as elevated road collapses in Bangkok

BANGKOK (AP)—At least one person was killed after an elevated road being built in Thailand's capital collapsed, and two others were listed as missing, with rescue crews unable to access the site Tuesday for fear of a further collapse, authorities said. Another 12 people were injured in the accident on Monday, according to the department of disaster prevention and mitigation. It was not immediately clear what caused the collapse of the road on the west side of Bangkok, but Governor Chadchart Sittipan said it had been severely damaged and remained inaccessible. The body of the one confirmed fatality has still not been recovered, he said, and rescue crews fear there might be more people trapped in the rubble of the elevated road, which has been under construction since 2020. Video footage of the moment of the collapse showed a blue metal structure that appeared to be used for holding the concrete slabs suddenly falling and bringing the whole structure down. People were seen screaming and running away from the site. The construction project was commissioned from Tharawan Construction and Npa Construction, according to the contract published on the website of the Office of the Official Information Commission. Chadchart speculated that the accident resulted from flaws in how the structures were put together.

World

Sweden moves closer to NATO membership

AP

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, left, shakes hands with Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, right, as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg looks on prior to a meeting ahead of a NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, Monday, July 10, 2023.

VILNIUS, Lithuania (AP)—Sweden's membership of NATO took a big step forward on Monday after Turkey agreed to remove one of the last major roadblocks in return for help in reviving Turkey's own chances of joining the European Union.

At talks in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, where U.S. President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts are meeting for a two-day summit starting Tuesday, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan committed to put the Nordic country's accession protocol before Parliament "as soon as possible," the head of NATO said.

"This is an historic day because we have a clear commitment by Turkey to submit the ratification documents to the Grand National Assembly, and to work also with the assembly to ensure ratification," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters after a series of high-stakes meetings.

Sweden's NATO accession has been held up by objections from Turkey since last year. The Turkish parliament's ratification of the accession protocol is one of the last steps in the process.

Stoltenberg made the announcement after talks with Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson on the eve of a NATO summit in Lithuania.

"Today we took a very big step on the road toward complete ratification," Kristersson said.

There was no comment from Erdogan on the move, which many saw as linked in part to Turkey's demands on other issues, particularly Erdogan's desire for support for European Union membership from European leaders and for F-16 fighter jets from the United States.

It's unclear when the Nordic country's membership might be approved, but the agreement appears to have taken the issue off the agenda of the summit, which was meant to focus uniquely on the war in Ukraine and Kyiv's own membership aspirations.

In a statement, Biden welcomed the agreement and said he will work with Turkey "on enhancing defense and deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic area. I look forward to welcoming Prime Minister Kristersson and Sweden as our 32nd NATO Ally."

Biden's reference to enhancing Turkey's defense capability was a nod to Biden's commitment to help Turkey acquire new F-16s, according to a U.S. administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment.

Israelis block highways to protest plan to overhaul judiciary

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli protesters blocked highways leading to Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv on Tuesday, at the start of a day of countrywide demonstrations against the government's planned judicial overhaul that has divided the nation.

The demonstrations came the morning after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's parliamentary coalition gave initial approval for a bill to limit the Supreme Court's oversight powers, pressing forward with the contentious proposed changes to the judiciary despite widespread opposition.

The legislation is one of several bills proposed by Netanyahu's ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox allies. The plan has provoked months of sustained protests by opponents who say it is pushing the country toward authoritarian rule.

Anti-overhaul activists have called for nationwide mass demonstrations throughout the day, including protests at Israel's main international airport that could disrupt travel.

Police cleared protesters who blocked a main artery leading to Jerusalem with a water cannon and officers arrested several others who had obstructed a highway next to the central city of Modiin. Demonstrators blocked a main highway in Haifa with a large banner reading "together we will be victorious," snarling traffic along the beachfront.

Netanyahu's allies have proposed a series of changes to the Israeli legal system aimed at weakening what they say are the excessive powers of unelected judges. The proposed changes include giving Netanyahu's allies control over the appointment of judges and giving parliament power to overturn court decisions.

Netanyahu put the overhaul plan on hold in March after weeks of mass protests. But last month, he decided to revive the plan after talks with the political opposition aimed at finding a compromise collapsed.

The Netanyahu government, which took office in December, is the most hard-line ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox in Israel's 75-year history. His allies proposed the sweeping changes to the judiciary after the country held its fifth elections in under four years, all of them seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's fitness to serve as prime minister while on trial for corruption.

Critics of the plan say it will upset the country's fragile system of checks and balances and concentrate power in the hands of Netanyahu and his allies. They also say Netanyahu has a conflict of interest because he is on trial for charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes, all of which he has denied.

A wide swath of Israeli society, including reserve military officers, business leaders, LGBTQ+ and other minority groups have joined the protests.

Good Housekeeping

How to tell when your roof needs replacing

By KAITLYN KEEGAN
Hartford Courant

When most homeowners start considering renovation projects, they think about redoing the kitchen, painting the bedroom, or updating a bathroom.

They don't consider their roof.

Out of sight and out of mind for many homeowners, your roof keeps everything below it safe and sound. It should be paid more attention than it usually is.

During the early days of the pandemic—especially while the real estate market was very hot—supply chain issues, labor shortages and pricing increases deterred homeowners from replacing their roof or siding or windows, Jim Carroll of JP Carroll Construction said. Some of that has begun to slow, however some shortages remain and prices are still higher than before the pandemic.

Along with buying a new home, many homeowners forego a roof inspection during the home buying process.

"In a hot real estate market, homebuyers may be tempted to remove any conditions from their offer to purchase, including a roof inspection, so their bid wins the house," Carroll said. "However, hiring a roofing professional provides essential information about the property's value, such as whether a potential new home's roof needs repairs or a replacement."

Carroll also said many insurance companies need information on the roof before they quote a homeowner's policy. This affects your coverage and premium based on the age of the roof and when it was last inspected.

In many cases, homeowners don't pay attention to the roof until it leaks.

"Even then, repairs are often put off until the problem is too great to be ignored," Carroll said. "Roof leaks are more than just annoyances that must be remedied. They can be the cause of severe internal structure damage and can also contribute to the occurrence of mold and mildew which can cause indoor air quality problems."

There are a few things every homeowner can watch out for so they know when their roof needs to be attended to.

Watch out after storms

Summertime can bring about some of the most severe storms, fires, hail and floods. According to Carroll, nearly 1 in 3 Americans experienced a weather disaster of some kind in the summer of 2021 and the trend is expected to continue. Fall is also the ideal time to plan ahead for winter storms that can bring about ice dams and freezing temperatures.

Clean your gutters and downspouts

Check your gutters and downspouts frequently to ensure that water is running off your roof and away from your home, especially away from the foundation. A full or clogged gutter, Carroll explained, may cause water to back up onto your roof and into your attic. This can cause a gutter to fall from excessive weight if it's too backed up.

Trim troublesome trees

Don't overlook leaning branches, Carroll said. Trees too close to your roof can scratch and gouge the roof. This can damage or puncture your shingles.

Make sure the roof can breathe

Without proper ventilation, heat and moisture can cause sheathing and rafting to rot, he said. Roofing materials can also buckle and insulation can lose its effectiveness. This can cause the entire roof to be ineffective. A new roof can have several different methods installed to help your roof breathe depending on the type of house you have. This could be ridge vents or fixing soffits.

Keep an eye on your attic

No one likes to crawl up into the attic. Most attics you have to climb a ladder to get into. However, keeping an eye on your attic is crucial to your roof and house's health. Check after heavy rains and winds and look for water stains, weak shingles or rusting nails.

Check for shingle damage

Shingles are damaged in many ways. They can come off, lose granules, curl or loosen. Shingles are exposed to everyday wear and tear from the elements. When the roof loses shingles, it causes the roof and interior space to be vulnerable to water seepage and rot. Some of these can be repaired while too much damage will be the sign it's time for a new roof.

If you need a new roof, get multiple quotes

Carroll suggests getting at least two quotes so homeowners can determine the best combination of quality and price. Roofs last decades on your house and you want to think long term and not just cheap when choosing a contractor.

What red flags should I look out for in contractors?

By PAUL F. P. POGUE
Ask Angi

Nearly all contracting jobs go smoothly. You hire them, they do the work, you pay them, everyone moves on happily. Nonetheless, every so often, you run into an unscrupulous contractor who only has dollar signs in their eyes and thinks you're the perfect mark. And in times of bad weather, they tend to emerge even more. Arm yourself with information and keep a lookout for the red flags that indicate a contractor may be about to scam you.

THE FLAG: "We had some materials left over from another job. We'll give you a good rate on a driveway resurfacing job if you hire us right now."

THE RESPONSE: Turn them down politely.

THE PROBLEM: Experienced contractors don't usually have extra materials left over to just go wandering up and down the street looking to get rid of them. The odds are high these are traveling contractors with no local address, possibly using substandard materials. If you hire someone like this and have a problem with the work later on, most likely they'll put on a layer or two of low-quality toppings that look good for a few months, but when and if it starts to fail, you'll often never find the contractors again.

DREAMSTIME/TNS

After major storms come through an area, "storm chasers" often arrive from out of town and do shoddy work. Be cautious when hiring.

THE FLAG: "Trust us, we're going to use high-quality materials on this job."

THE RESPONSE: Don't let the job run on autopilot.

THE PROBLEM: The bait-and-switch is an old and common scam with roots far beyond contracting. The unscrupulous pro shows off high-quality paint and carpet that they're going to use on your job, you pay a down payment to buy the necessary materials, and then they buy a few high-quality materials, skimp on the rest, and then they pocket the difference. In this case, paying close attention to the job will protect you. Double-check all receipts for purchases and make sure they're using the quality materials that they promised.

Tweet your home care questions with #AskingAngi and we'll try to answer them in a future column.

THE FLAG: "We don't need to bother pulling permits for this project."

THE RESPONSE: Make sure all necessary permits are pulled.

THE PROBLEM: Sometimes, unscrupulous contractors will cut corners and try to save money or time by claiming you don't need permits for a project, or that you do need permits but they're an easily skipped formality. Rules vary from place to place, but anything that involves load-bearing walls, or running new pipe or electrical wire often calls for a permit and an inspection.

Permits are often required for good reason. If you skip an inspection, the work might hide nasty surprises. And even if the work turns out fine, unpermitted work can complicate a home sale if it comes up during the inspection.

THE FLAG: "We don't need to put anything in writing."

THE RESPONSE: Always get it in writing.

THE PROBLEM: Reputable contractors have no problem putting things in writing. Written agreements protect both sides in the event of disputes or problems with the work. A good contractor will be willing to provide copies of their licensing and insurance, receipts, warranties, and any other important part of a paper trail.

THE FLAG: "Everyone's really busy with last week's storm, but we can fit you in today."

THE RESPONSE: Hire a reliable local professional.

THE PROBLEM: After a major storm that might have downed many trees or damaged many houses and roofs, local contractor schedules fill up at lightspeed. But then you see an ad for a company you've never heard of before that's offering to fix storm damage ASAP. Storm chasers are traveling companies that descend on a territory after severe weather, collect as many down payments and insurance checks as possible, and disappear after doing shoddy work or no work at all.

Unfortunately, the only solution here is patience. It's better to wait on a reliable local pro that you know stands behind their work, than to hire a storm chaser you're not likely to ever see again.

Life & Style

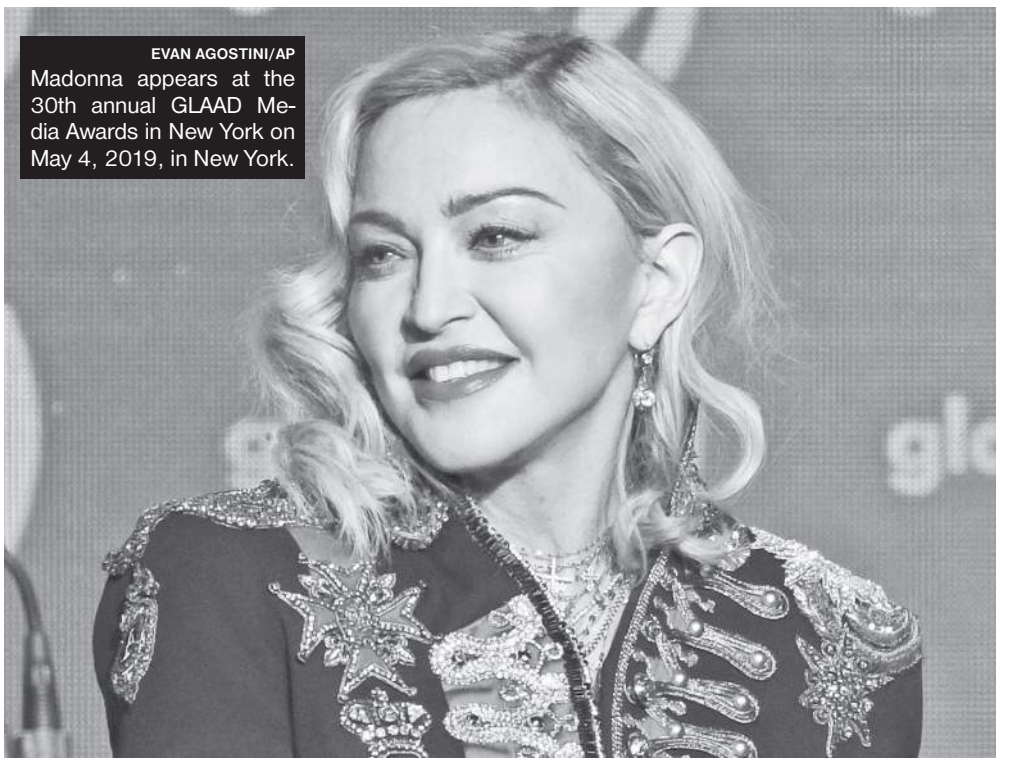
Madonna says she's now 'on the road to recovery'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Madonna says she is focused on her health and getting back on stage after a "serious bacterial infection" that led to her hospitalization in an an intensive care unit for several days last month.

"I'm on the road to recovery and incredibly grateful for all the blessings in my life," the pop superstar wrote on Instagram. "My first thought when I woke up in the hospital was my children. My second thought was that I did not want to disappoint anyone who bought tickets for my tour. I also didn't want to let down the people who worked tirelessly with me over the last few months to create my show."

"My focus now is on my health and getting stronger and I assure you, I'll be back with you as soon as I can," she continued.

The North American leg of her career-spanning Celebration Tour, originally scheduled to kick off July 15 in Vancouver and run through October 8 in Las Vegas, has been postponed. Her tour will now start on October 14, at London's O2 Arena.



EVAN AGOSTINI/AP
Madonna appears at the 30th annual GLAAD Media Awards in New York on May 4, 2019, in New York.

Live Nation confirmed the postponement. "Rescheduled dates will be announced as soon as possible. Fans are encouraged to hold onto their tickets as they will be valid for the new dates once announced," a statement read.

According to her manager Guy Oseary, on June 24, Madonna "developed a serious bacterial infection which led to a several-day stay in the ICU," as he wrote on Instagram a few days later. "Her health is improving, however she is still under medical care. A full recovery is expected."

'Insidious 5' topples 'Indiana Jones' before 'Mission: Impossible' launches

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

Indiana Jones' reign atop the box office was short-lived. In its second weekend in theaters, the Disney release was usurped by another franchise fifth – " Insidious: The Red Door." The horror film starring and directed by Patrick Wilson scared up $32.7 million in ticket sales from 3,188 theaters, according to studio estimates on Sunday.

It did better than the last installment, "Insidious: The Last Key," from 2018 and is the most any PG-13 horror movie has earned in its debut in the past two years.

"Insidious 5" was not well reviewed—but modestly budgeted scary movies are often critic-proof when it comes to the box office. This Blumhouse-produced franchise starring Wilson and Rose Byrne began in 2011 under the direction of James Wan and has been responsible for over $570 million in global box office returns—and none of the films have cost more than $16 million to produce. Only the first movie received a "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes; The "Insidious" films more often garner sub 40% scores.

"The horror genre seems to have a never-ending allure for audiences," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "Horror movies are profitable and they're popular. Audiences love them and the accountants love them, too."

It was shrewd of Sony to release "Insidious" on the weekend between two Hollywood tentpoles, in this case " Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny " and " Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part I," which opens on Wednesday. But it was still a surprise that it was able to take No. 1 from something as well-known as "Indiana Jones."

"It was a perfect release date," Dergarabedian said. "This adds more complexity to the dynamics of the marketplace."

Syria revokes BBC accreditation over alleged bias

BEIRUT (AP)—Syria's Information Ministry revoked the BBC's media accreditation, days after the British public broadcaster aired a report linking members of Syrian President Bashar Assad's family and senior army officials to the production and smuggling of illicit drugs.

The documentary, broadcast in late June, describes a multibillion-dollar business involving the highly addictive amphetamine known as Captagon

The Syrian ministry said it revoked the BBC's accreditation after repeated warnings about what it claimed were "misleading reports relying on statements and testimonies from terrorist entities and those hostile to Syria." The ministry made no mention of the documentary and did not back up its claims of biased reporting.

The BBC dismissed the ministry's allegations, saying it provides impartial and independent journalism.

"We speak to people across the political spectrum to establish the facts," the BBC said in a statement emailed to The Associated Press over the weekend. "We will continue to provide impartial news and information to our audiences across the Arabic-speaking world".

The BBC's radio and television correspondents as well as its videographer lost their accreditation.

The production and smuggling of Captagon pills has blossomed in war-torn Syria in recent years. Experts say it is a source of revenue for the country's crippled economy and sanctioned leadership. Neighboring Jordan and Saudi Arabia, as well as other Gulf countries, have long complained about the scourge of the cheap drugs from Syria.

Captagon is used as a recreational drug, but also by fighters on the battlefield and by manual laborers.

The United Kingdom, United States, and European Union have sanctioned a handful of drug kingpins and close associates of Assad for their involvement in the trade.

The Syrian government denies any involvement in the production of Captagon. A Syrian lawmaker told the AP last month that Syria has been used as a transit state for Captagon and other drugs, and accused opposition groups of running the industry.

After Syria restored relations with many of its neighboring countries and returned to the Arab fold, cracking down on drug smuggling has been a key issue in regional talks.

Man 'dating' estranged wife is unsure what future holds

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I have been together more than 20 years. Our relationship grew stale over time, and a couple of years ago, she decided to leave me. However, over the few years, even though she has had several lovers, we have started to get close again.

The problem is, I really love her and want her back as my GIRLFRIEND, but she sees this as a casual relationship, which leaves me feeling hurt. For example, she doesn't see a problem with having a long conversation with another lover while she's at my house. When she realizes that I'm hurt, she gets exasperated and says she feels like she has to "walk on eggshells" around me. Is it me? Is there a path forward?

STRANGE SITUATION IN FLORIDA

DEAR STRANGE SITUATION: Your problem is you have allowed yourself to be put in the "friends with benefits" category when what you really want is an exclusive relationship with your ex. IT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN. If she's talking with other men while she's at your house, it means she's not interested in how her actions affect you. The path forward is one that's as far away as you can get from this person because your agendas are polar opposites.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a widow who recently became engaged to a man who, I'm realizing after two years, has a gambling addiction. He recently lied to me about his whereabouts, and I found out this same thing went on during his first marriage. I can't say for sure this was the first time he was untruthful, but I had a gut feeling.

We had developed what I thought was a good relationship based on mutual respect and trust. I could use some advice about what I should do going forward. He has become my friend and family since I have no children and have lost not only my late husband, but also a brother and recently my father.

THROWN IN NORTH DAKOTA

DEAR THROWN: I know you are lonely. But if you love your fiance, continue the relationship as it IS, and do not plan on marrying him. Realize that should you marry a person with a gambling addiction, commingling your assets could ruin you financially and affect your retirement.

If he has a desire to change, there are 12-step programs he could join, Gamblers Anonymous being one of them (gamblersanonymous.org). But please be aware that compulsive gambling is an addiction, and your fiance could fall off the wagon at any time.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband texted a graphic nude photo of himself to his ex-girlfriend. I am shocked and hurt. Should I leave this man?

CAN'T UNSEE IT IN WEST VIRGINIA

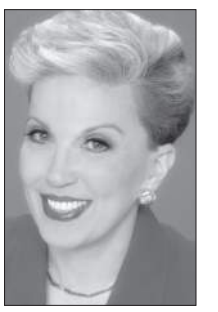
DEAR CAN'T UNSEE: Yes, I think you should, because the naked truth is that your husband isn't finished with his former girlfriend.

■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

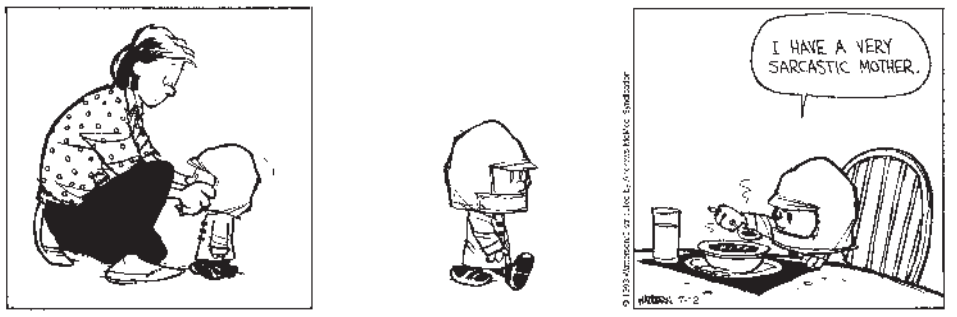


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

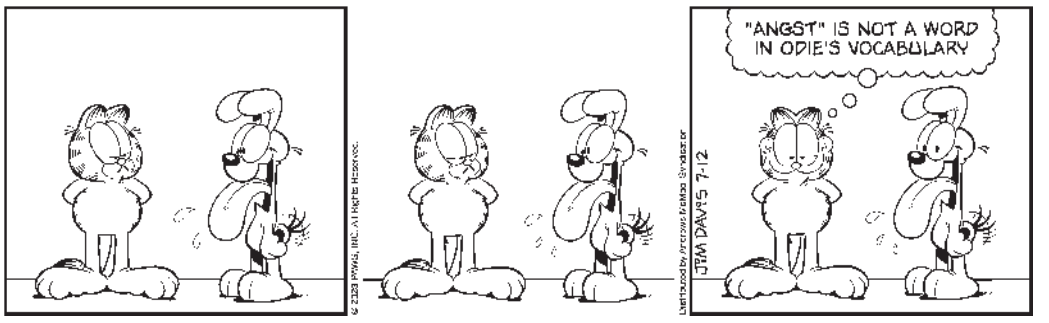
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



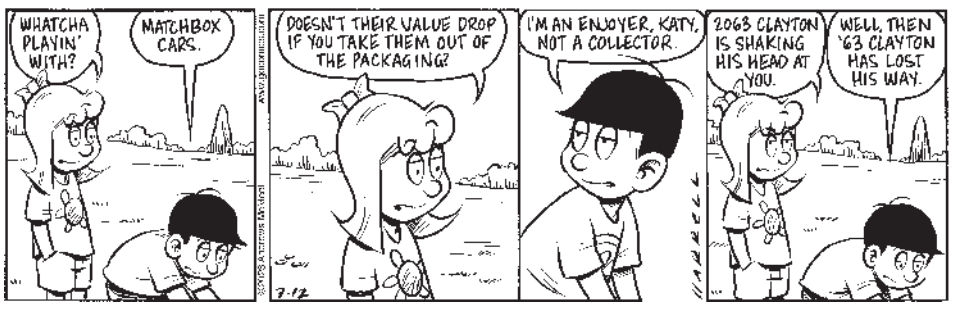
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset


WHATCHA PLAYIN' WITH?
MATCHBOX CARS.
DOESN'T THEIR VALUE DROP IF YOU TAKE THEM OUT OF THE PACKAGING?
I'M AN ENJOYER, KATY, NOT A COLLECTOR.
2063 CLAYTON IS SHAKING HIS HEAD AT YOU.
WELL, THEN '63 CLAYTON HAS LOST HIS WAY.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I'M CREATING AN ACCOUNT FOR YOU ON A DOG DATING SITE. YOU NEED A SOCIAL LIFE.
I'VE GOT, "MY NAME IS FANG. I'M A FUN-LOVING PIT BULL WHO ENJOYS BARKING AT SQUIRRELS..."
... I DON'T BELIEVE IN SNIFFING BUTTS UNTIL THE 2ND DATE.
I LIKE HOW YOU MAKE ME SOUND CLASSY.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

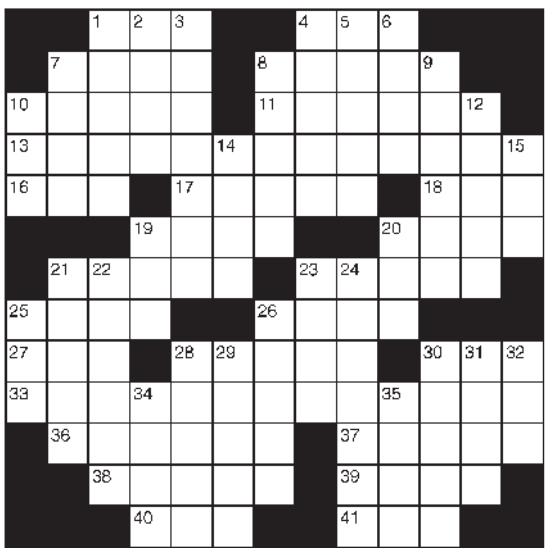
ACROSS
1 Smidgen
4 Pouch
7 Only
8 Café con —
10 Bob Marley, for one
11 Ancient
13 Donna Summer hit of 1978
16 Govt. lender for a start-up
17 Author Joyce Carol —
18 — chi
19 Con
20 Office part-timer
21 Ranch visitors
23 Touches down
25 Lapel jewelry
26 Legal wrong
27 Arles buddy
28 Battery-powered two-wheeler
30 Ninny
33 Crunchy Hawaiian treats
36 Trattoria desserts
37 Jockey
38 Was livid
39 Luau strings
40 Orig. texts
41 Martini liquor

DOWN
1 Puccini opera
2 Utah ski resort
3 Cherished friend
4 Musical transition
5 PCs from Taiwan
6 Karate move
7 Swedish car
8 Christine of "Chicago Hope"
9 Euphoric
10 Apt. divisions
12 Small measures
14 Body pics
15 Half a ton
19 Billboards
20 Potent stick
21 "Joltin' Joe"
22 Relief org. for kids
23 Norse trickster
24 Floor covering
25 Nonstick spray
26 Shy
28 Dutch cheeses
29 Kathy of "Misery"
30 Poet W.H.
31 Fr. holy women
32 Old map letters
34 Reunion attendee
35 "The Mother" director Caro

Solution time: 23 mins.

W	A	G	S		M	A	A		S	C	A	H		
C	R	L	C		U	L	T		C	I	O	I		
L	E	A	D		I	A	M	A	R	I	N	D		
T	A	M	A	L	E	S		D	I	C	E	S		
			T	A	D		Z	A	P					
F	A	R	F	S		T	A	M	T	A	M	S		
I	S	P			Γ	I	G			N	O	R		
T	A	M	P	F	R	S		D	O	T	F	S		
			C	L	Y		B	O	L					
S	A	G	A	S		T	A	M	I	F	I	U		
T	A	M	P	A	B	A	Y		V	Γ	Γ	R		
O	R	F	O		O	O	O		F	T	O	N		
W	F	N	D		A	S	U		S	A	S	S		

Yesterday's answer 7-12



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Malala Yousafzai, 26; Kimberly Perry, 40; Michelle Rodriguez, 45; Topher Grace, 45.

Happy Birthday: Check who's on your side and willing to step in and take over. Surround yourself with allies and share your ideas. Strength and courage will help you bring about positive change and greater security. Use your intelligence when dealing with money matters, contracts and joint ventures. Know when to say no and when to work alone. Choose the power of positive thought over discord. Your numbers are 2, 8, 19, 27, 33, 44, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You can talk your way into anything today, but your dreams will crumble if you don't follow through with your promises. Offer only what's feasible, and be willing to work alongside those who have as much to offer as you do. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Social events won't unfold as anticipated. Rethink how you spend your time, and be honest about what you will and won't do. Risks will lead to regrets. A change of heart will take you in a different direction. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't be fooled by the information someone offers you. Signing up for something that isn't clear will put you in a vulnerable position. Don't get angry when time is of the essence and change is necessary. Love yourself and follow your heart. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A physical change won't unfold as anticipated. Don't give someone the right to be your fashion or health expert. Research is in your best interest if you want to be happy with the results. Distance yourself from harmful situations. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Think twice before you start something you cannot finish. Protect your reputation and position. Don't expect someone to cover for you. Use your experience and knowledge to push forward. Don't become something you are not. You can't buy love. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* A change will lift you and boost your confidence. Travel, educational pursuits, events and activities that encourage spending time with friends, relatives or colleagues will bring you closer together. Channel your energy into building a stable future and lasting relationships. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Control your emotions and let your intelligence shine through. Don't feel the need to pay for others or to get involved in a joint venture. You'll do your best if you keep both your money separate from and your sights set on what makes you happy. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Put your current situation in perspective and consider what you'd like more of in your life. A change at home that adds to your comfort or eases stress and tension will make a world of difference to your attitude. Resolve sensitive issues. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Pay attention to money matters. Update documents, accounts and credit cards to reduce unnecessary annual fees and interest payments. Taking control will put your mind at ease once you have a plan in place. Be smart. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Spend more time nurturing what's important to you. Don't take chances with your personal life, possessions or money. A change at home that adds comfort, convenience and entertainment features will attract closer ties with loved ones. Choose a healthy, risk-free lifestyle. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Think twice before you pick a fight with someone. Assess your relationships, intentions and the changes you want to make before sharing your thoughts and feelings. Avoid excess, exaggeration and promising more than you can deliver. Be good to yourself. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Follow your plans, and you'll feel good about your accomplishments. Invest more time and money in yourself and the skills you need to pursue the life you want to live. Create your destiny instead of waiting for it to manifest itself. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are enthusiastic, changeable and wise. You are determined and helpful.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

						7	6	
5	8	9			7			
			3	2				
		2	7	1				
7		3		4	6		9	5
			8		5			
	7			5			8	3
	3				2		7	
4			1	7		2		

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/12

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesturday's Answer

5	8	3	6	1	2	9	4	7
1	6	4	3	7	9	2	8	5
7	9	2	5	8	4	1	3	6
9	7	8	1	2	3	5	6	4
2	3	5	9	4	6	7	1	8
4	1	6	7	5	8	3	2	9
3	5	7	8	6	1	4	9	2
6	4	9	2	3	7	8	5	1
8	2	1	4	9	5	6	7	3

Difficulty: ★★ 7/11

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

NEW COIFFURES **Solution: 9 letters**

S	C	D	E	L	L	E	G	L	E	Z	T	E	R	P
T	L	S	L	R	U	C	N	R	O	S	E	B	U	D
S	I	I	H	P	O	Ⓛ	I	S	H	E	D	D	E	O
I	P	V	C	A	M	Ⓞ	H	A	W	K	E	T	F	U
W	P	E	Y	K	B	Ⓝ	S	S	S	P	R	A	Y	G
T	E	M	S	L	E	Ⓖ	U	T	M	A	D	B	D	H
N	D	H	U	S	E	D	R	U	P	E	O	O	O	N
A	A	N	O	L	U	A	B	C	I	D	N	B	B	U
G	T	C	S	B	L	O	G	A	P	R	E	S	V	T
E	S	R	H	N	M	E	M	U	C	R	O	P	I	O
L	D	E	L	S	U	O	T	B	E	K	K	I	N	P
E	A	W	G	L	T	B	C	R	Y	V	E	K	T	K
D	V	N	L	O	D	R	I	A	H	L	E	Y	A	N
E	A	A	T	E	N	D	R	I	L	S	L	N	G	O
B	T	T	W	I	R	L	E	D	D	E	S	A	E	T

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Bangs, Blunt, Bobs, Body, Braid, Brushing, Bumped Up, Buns, Clipped, Combo, Crew, Crop, Curls, Cuts, Done, Doughnut, Elegant, Even, Fade, Gelled, Hairdo, Head, Ivy League, Long, Mohawk, Mousse, Mullet, Parted, Polished, Pretzel, Rosebud, Shag, Sleek, Slicked Back, Spiky, Spray, Tall, Teased, Tendrils, Topknot, Tousled, Twirled, Twists, Updo, Vintage, Wave

Yesterday's Answer: Reimburse

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Vladimir Jr. joins Vladimir Sr. as 1st father-son HR Derby winners

SEATTLE (AP) — Of course a Junior had to do something special in Seattle.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. won the All-Star Home Run Derby on Monday night, matching Vladimir Sr.'s 2007 title to become the first father-son duo to accomplish the feat.

As far as who might win a head-to-head swing-off, well, that depends.

"It's kind of difficult right now," the Toronto Blue Jays star said with a wide grin, speaking through a translator. "With the time, with the minutes, I'll win. If it's by outs, he'll win."

In a ballpark made famous by the Mariners' Ken Griffey Jr. a generation earlier, Guerrero beat Tampa Bay's Randy Arozarena 25-23 in the final round. He was 8 when his father won the crown in San Francisco.

"I don't remember much about 2007," Vladimir Jr. said. "I guess I was too young."

Guerrero totaled 5 1/2 miles of homers — 29,390 feet to be exact. He defeated Julio Rodríguez 21-20 in the semifinals after the Mariners star hit a record 41 in the first round in front of his hometown fans.

Batting against Blue Jays manager John Schneider, Guerrero was the last semifinalist to swing and the first finalist, setting a final round record for homers to top the mark Pete Alonso set when he beat Guerrero 23-22 in 2019.

With Guerrero Jr. catching his breath while watching, Arozarena hit against Tampa Bay field coordinator Tomas Francisco. Arozarena had 21 homers in his initial 2 minutes. He had 23 with 7 seconds left in his automatic 30 seconds of bonus time before lining and popping up on his final four swings.

Guerrero had 1 minute of bonus time, earning an additional 30 seconds because he twice reached 440 feet.

"Obviously, the power that he has was incredible," Arozarena said through a translator. "For me, I felt good going into that round. But also he was able to get a minute of bonus time. I only had the 30 seconds of bonus time."

Vladimir Guerrero Sr. won the 2007 derby while with the Los Angeles Angels, beating the Blue Jays' Alex Rios 3-2 in the final.

Arozarena had the most overall homers over the three rounds, 82 to Guerrero's 72, and the most distance at 33,077 feet. Arozarena overcame Luis Robert of the Chicago White Sox 35-22 in the semifinals. Robert hit the longest drive of the night, a 484-foot shot to left in the second round. That topped the high of 476 feet by Barry Bonds in the 2001 derby in Seattle.

Trying to become the youngest Derby winner at age 22, Rodríguez knocked out Alonso, a two-time champion who hit 21. Rodríguez beat Corey Seager 32-24 in the first round last year at Dodger Stadium, then knocked out Alonso 31-23 before losing to Juan Soto 19-18 in the final.

Arozarena beat Texas' Adolis García 24-17 in the opening pairing before a crowd of 46,952 at T-Mobile Park. García is the godfather to Arozarena's daughter, and the two jumped into each other's arms during warmups.

Robert knocked out Baltimore's Adley Rutschman 28-27 in the opening round. Rutschman hit 21 left-handed, and the switch hitter then turned around to the right side and hit six more right-handed during a 30-second bonus round. From Portland, Oregon, Rutschman grew up attending Mariners games.

Guerrero, back for the first time in four years, defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers' Mookie Betts 26-11 in the first round. Four years ago at Cleveland, Guerrero hit 29 in the first round and 40 in the second, then lost to Alonso in the final.

Alonso was trying for his third title in four years. Griffey Jr. is the only three-time winner, taking the title in 1994, '98 and '99.

Guerrero Sr. was a nine-time All-Star but never won a World Series. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2018.

Guerrero Jr. is a three-time All-Star and was MVP of the game two years ago in Denver. What's in the future? A World Series ring? Joining dad in the Hall?

"I'm a little bit too young to think about that right now," he said. "When I get there, then I'll think about it, I'll see if I match my dad or was better than my dad or not."

AP

American League's Vladimir Guerrero Jr., of the Toronto Blue Jays, holds his trophy after winning the MLB All-Star baseball Home Run Derby in Seattle, Monday, July 10, 2023.

$500M? $600M? Ohtani's free agency buzz of All-Star Game

SEATTLE (AP)—At some point, Shohei Ohtani will entertain the idea of talking about his pending free agency, and what it could mean to the finances of baseball.

But that didn't stop others from pondering what could happen this offseason when perhaps the most unique free agent in history hits the open market.

Kansas City's Salvador Perez and Toronto's Jordan Romano both tossed out $600 million as a suggested number. Baltimore's Austin Hays offered everything in his theoretical wallet.

Dodgers' star Freddie Freeman simply called him a unicorn with a price that can't be quantified.

"He's going to get a lot of money and he deserves it. There's no other player out there like him," Atlanta's Sean Murphy said Monday. "I don't know what I would do if I was in the position of having to sign him, but he's incredible."

The biggest attraction of Tuesday's All-Star Game is also the biggest prize this offseason. Ohtani's contract with the Los Angeles Angels ends after this season, making the two-way star the desire of everyone in baseball with a checkbook big enough.

But quantifying how much Ohtani deserves isn't simple or straightforward. How does one create a number that considers his value as a pitcher and a hitter?

"I think when he first came over to Major League Baseball, a lot of people were really saying, 'Hey, this guy's gonna have to do one or the other. It's really special the way you can do it right now, but how long can he do it?'" Philadelphia closer Craig Kimbrel said. "We're still sitting here talking about him being best on both sides. It's really fun to watch."

Ohtani's deal in free agency likely to exceed anything baseball has previously seen in contract value, either in total over the life of the deal or average per season.

Whichever route Ohtani and his reps at CAA choose, the winning suitor will be making a substantial financial commitment. The $426.5 million, 12-year deal signed by Mike Trout or the $360 million deal signed last offseason by Aaron Judge may look minor in comparison.

"As much money as I have. I'm giving him everything that I've got," said Hays, the starting center fielder in Tuesday's All-Star Game.

Ohtani was already going to get a staggering payday but his performance the first half of this season potentially added a little more paycheck. Ohtani hit the break with 32 homers and 71 RBIs offensively, a 3.32 ERA and 132 strikeouts in 100 1/3 innings, and a combined wins above replacement of 6.0 per Fangraphs, the highest in baseball.

"As a fan of baseball it's just amazing to watch what he's able to do," Freeman said. "I know what it takes to be a hitter and how much work and preparation and mindset you've got to do to do that every single day. And this man, every five days, is pitching too. I don't understand it. I don't even know how to put a number on that. We'll all find out together."

Ohtani was swarmed by media on Monday and didn't address any of the lingering unknowns of next season or the upcoming trade deadline, saying his focus is on helping the Angels win as much as possible.

Sandwiched in between the Ohtani circus and Seattle star Julio Rodríguez on the warning track of T-Mobile Park was Houston's Kyle Tucker, having a terrific season in his own right.

"They get pretty much all the media and I just hang out here, so that's kind of nice," Tucker said.

Tucker has seen his share of Ohtani up close with the Astros and Angels both in the AL West. Tucker described playing against Ohtani as "fun, but tough at the same time."

"Just that you're facing Shohei, which is kind of fun," Tucker said. "Whenever you have a very good pitcher out there on the mound that's very competitive it's a little more fun."

Fun is relative when its someone with the pitch arsenal of Ohtani. The same goes for any pitchers who have tried to find the gaps in Ohtani's swing and avoid becoming part of his home run highlight reel.

"Every time he's out there I'm trying to sneak a peek at him and watch him," Boston closer Kenley Jansen said.

Dodgers catcher Will Smith may have summed it up best, noting that at age 29, Ohtani seems to be hitting his prime.

"It's incredible what he's doing," Smith said. "He seems to keep getting better, which is more incredible, honestly."

Jabeur reaches quarterfinals, where defending champion Rybakina awaits

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)—Ons Jabeur is getting another shot at Elena Rybakina, a year after losing to her in the Wimbledon final.

It's just the quarterfinals this time around, but the Tunisian player has to go through the defending champion to have a chance of winning her first Grand Slam tournament.

The sixth-seeded Jabeur routed two-time champion Petra Kvitova 6-0, 6-3 on Monday in the fourth round at the All England Club.

"I'm probably going for my revenge," Jabeur said on court. "It was a difficult final last year. It's going to bring a lot of memories."

Jabeur has been a Grand Slam runner-up twice — both times last year. After losing to Rybakina in three sets at Wimbledon, she lost to Iga Swiatek in straight sets at the U.S. Open — falling just short of becoming the first African or Arab woman to win a major tennis tournament in the sport's professional era.

AP

Tunisia's Ons Jabeur returns to Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova in a women's singles match on day eight of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Monday, July 10, 2023.

Two things jump out to Jabeur when she thinks about the Wimbledon loss to Rybakina, who represents Kazakhstan but was born in Russia.

"The fact that I was really exhausted like emotionally," she began. "I wanted to keep pushing, but I felt little bit empty. Second thing, maybe what my coach kept telling me, to stick more to the plan, to do certain things, even though I was thinking something else in that match."

The 28-year-old Jabeur hopes to "play more freely, just think about each point and not the results."

Mission accomplished on Monday, when Jabeur felt free enough on Centre Court to execute a David Beckham-style — Jabeur is a fan of the England great — half-volley kick on a bouncing ball while up a set and 3-1.

The ninth-seeded Kvitova, who eliminated Jabeur in the first round at Wimbledon in 2019, dug herself a hole from the start, committing a double-fault and three unforced errors to hand Jabeur a service break in the first game.

Rybakina advanced Monday when Beatriz Haddad Maia retired from their match with a lower back injury with Rybakina leading 4-1.

"Now I'm feeling much better and more confident coming and playing on Centre Court," Rybakina said. "It is different from the first round. I think it was just overall the atmosphere and the nerves to play the first match to get used to the grass, just to play some matches here. I think now mentally I'm much better. Physically also good now."

In other women's results, second-seeded Aryna Sabalenka reached the quarterfinals by beating No. 21 Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-4, 6-0. The Australian Open champion will next face Madison Keys. The American, seeded No. 25, defeated 16-year-old Mirra Andreeva 3-6, 7-6 (4), 6-2.

On Tuesday, top-ranked Iga Swiatek plays Elina Svitolina on Centre Court for a spot in the semifinals, and fourth-seeded Jessica Pegula faces Marketa Vondrousova in the day's other women's quarterfinal match.

Blazers willing to wait months to resolve Lillard saga, if necessary

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Damian Lillard wants to be traded to the Miami Heat. The Portland Trail Blazers know this yet haven't abandoned hope that the seven-time All-Star changes his mind.

And whether he does or not, the Blazers insist that they're in no hurry.

General manager Joe Cronin, at the news conference where the team unveiled its new five-year, $160 million contract with Jerami Grant, spoke at length about the impasse with Lillard. He offered no specifics on talks—not negotiating publicly—and revealed that he hasn't spoken with Lillard since the franchise cornerstone asked to be traded.

"We're going to be patient," Cronin said Monday. "We're going to do what's best for our team. We're going to see, you know, how this lands. And if it takes months, it takes months."

Lillard's trade request became publicly known on July 1, the first full day of free agency in the NBA. After the Blazers revealed that Lillard —who has spent all 11 of his pro seasons in Portland— asked out, agent Aaron Goodwin confirmed days later that the seven-time All-NBA selection wants to go to Miami.

"Dame's position won't change," Goodwin told The Associated Press last week. "This entire situation was about building an opportunity for Portland to win or giving him another opportunity that he wants, which is Miami."

The entire matter is complicated on so many levels — that the trade request became public, that Lillard wants to be traded only to Miami (he doesn't have a no-trade clause, and Portland is under no obligation to honor that request), that he is beloved as an all-time great in Portland and that not having him on the roster simply means the team probably won't have enough to truly compete in the loaded Western Conference.

"As a team, you always hope that you have more options," Cronin said. "To have limited options like that, I wouldn't call it frustrating, but it prevents you from perhaps getting the best return. So, it's something that we'll have to work through."

And in his eyes, there's still hope that Lillard changes his mind — although there's been no indication that will happen.

"I haven't lost hope, just because I understand this league is complicated and things change very quickly sometimes," Cronin said.

The Blazers have a core of young talent – Anfernee Simons just turned 24, Shaedon Sharpe is going into his second season after being the No. 7 pick in 2022 and point guard Scoot Henderson is entering the league as the No. 3 pick in this draft. Cronin said he gets why Lillard would look at the Blazers, as currently constructed, and feel like there isn't a clear path to contending for a title this coming season.

"I could see why Dame would look at it and say, 'Well, this isn't a win-now opportunity, or at least as much of a win-now opportunity in some other places,'" Cronin said. "So, from that regard, I understand his position and I respect it and it makes sense to me why he would like to go elsewhere."

But Cronin also believes that great days are coming for Simons, Sharpe and Henderson.

"Those guys are going to impact winning very soon in this league," Cronin said.

Lillard is coming off a season in which he averaged 32.2 points for the Trail Blazers. He is a member of the NBA's 75th anniversary team, but he has never been close to a title in his 11 seasons in the league.

He met with Portland multiple times, asking for the roster to be upgraded to the point where he can compete for a championship. But those efforts did not go to Lillard's liking. And now, the trade watch is on.

"It's just hard. How do you replace Damian Lillard? Who is the person in the market-places that is available that is a better player than Dame?" Cronin said. "No team more than us knows what this market looks like. We've been trying for 18 months to find the Dame equivalent at another position or someone that's 80% of Dame, even. So, that's the challenge and that's why we've got to keep working."

Spurs decide Wembanyama's Summer League is over after 2 games

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Victor Wembanyama's first, and likely last, Summer League is over.

The San Antonio Spurs said Monday that they have seen all they needed from the No. 1 pick in this year's draft and won't play him during their remaining games in Las Vegas.

Wembanyama's final numbers from two games: 36 points, 20 rebounds, eight blocks and three assists on 41% shooting from the floor. He played about 54 minutes.

The shutdown wasn't a surprise; the Spurs never planned for Wembanyama to play the entirety of Summer League, and now they'll have a chance to use the minutes he would have gotten to take a look at other players.

"I'm going to sit down with the Spurs to know what the next months are going to be like," Wembanyama said Sunday night after what became his summer finale. "When to go on vacation, when to start back working out, where I'm going to practice, in San Antonio or somewhere else. I just know I've got two to three months—two to three great months—that are coming and they're going to change my life."

Shutting him down from games—San Antonio has either three or four games left in Las Vegas—starts what will be a needed break for the 19-year-old from France whose last professional season in his homeland started nearly a year ago. He was in the French playoffs up until a few days before the draft in June, and his schedule has been crazed since.

Put simply, the Spurs believe he needs a chance to rest and reset to get ready for training camp that starts in early October and then an 82-game regular season.

"In the past month, I think basketball wasn't even 50% of my schedule," Wembanyama said. "I can't stand it. I know it's a special moment in my life, but I'm glad it's over. Honestly. I just want to hoop. I just want to work out, lift because this is my life. Obviously, every first pick is going to go through this. And it just makes me better for the future."

It has been a whirlwind few days in Las Vegas for the Spurs. Wembanyama's debut on Friday night had a circus-like atmosphere with a sold-out crowd and enormous attention; Sunday's game wasn't quite the same, but the crowd was still huge. And more big news came between those games on Saturday when Gregg Popovich's new five-year contract to remain coach and president of the team was announced.

As would be expected, the Popovich signing delighted Wembanyama.

"There's something great going on, starting," Wembanyama said. "We kind of knew it was going to happen, but now it's, let's get it rolling. We can get started now."

Wembanyama took part in the NBA's required rookie transition program on Monday, where he spoke with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver — who has raved about the 7-foot-3 star many times since first meeting him in Paris in January.

"I'm not sure if anything else I'd say could put more pressure on him, because there's already so much pressure on him and attention," Silver said Monday while speaking to the Associated Press Sports Editors convention in Las Vegas. "But it seems, at least initially, that he's well equipped to handle it."

And everyone from teammates, opponents and even NBA greats like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Jerry West have raved about what they've seen from Wembanyama in recent days.

"The difficulty is learning how you can best contribute to a winning effort," Abdul-Jabbar told him. "That's what you've got to learn how to do with your skill set. You will find out what that is basically in preseason. You'll find out a lot about that."

Vegas is a showtown. Wembanyama put on a show, and the Spurs said it was enough. And now his focus shifts to his first real season.

"He's amazing," San Antonio guard Blake Wesley said. "He's an amazing person on and off the court."

CNMI, Guam coaches go through 1st ever NMIFA 'B' coaching course

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Ten coaches from the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, including two from the Guam Football Association, completed Module 1 of NMIFA's first ever B Coaching Diploma Course at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

The course is divided into four modules, with Module 1 from July 6 to July 11.

The next three are from Aug. 8 to 14, 2023; from Dec. 6 to 12, 2023; and from Jan. 15 to 21, 2024.

Christy Villaflor, Russ Zapanta, Ronel Ocanada, Jireh Yobech, Mikky Vargas, Davy Laxa, Chris Aninzo, and Martin Jambor are the coaches from the CNMI.

NMIFA technical director and head coach Michiteru Mita is the main instructor for the course, while Asian Football Confederation and Japan Football Association's Takeshi Ono and Yasuhiko Kimura assisted in the first module of the course.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 10 coaches from the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, including two from the Guam Football Association, are joined by head instructor NMIFA technical director Michiteru Mita, seated third from left, Chelsea FC Soccer School coach Jimmy Tang, seated right, and AFC/JFA coach Takeshi Ono, third from right.

All modules will have coaches attend classroom discussions and practical sessions on the pitch.

Day 1 last Thursday was the introduction and course guidance, along with game analysis. Before the course started, an opening ceremony was held, with NMIFA president Jerry Tan making a few remarks.

Tan said, "This course is a significant undertaking for the NMIFA, as we fully recognize coaching as a critical component of our program. It is through the dedication and commitment of our coaches that we are able to develop players and continue to grow our program."

He added, "The NMIFA fully supports initiatives and programs that are aimed at providing our coaches the opportunity to raise their skill level, gain more knowledge and experience, and create a pathway to an advanced coaching career and education."

He then wished them good luck and thanked partners Asian Football Confederation, Japan Football Association, and head coach Mita for making the first ever NMIFA B Coaching Diploma Course happen.

As for Mita, he said that having this coaching training is important for player development. He said JFA's success is because of focus on youth development and coaching and that's what's trying to be emulated in the CNMI.

"Qualified and quality coaches support [the] development of players," he said.

Mita said that a football association follows the Asian Football Confederation standards as members of the AFC. Under the AFC coaching convention established in 2019, a football association must design its coaching course following the criteria of the AFC coach convention and with AFC's approval.

After NMIFA'a approval of conducting the B coaching course, NMIFA was finally able to conduct their first ever B coaching course.

Mita said that the AFC sent coaching course assessor Kimura from the AFC coach education panel and not only observed the course but also gave the NMIFA a lot of advice.

"With everyone's support we managed to conduct a B coaching course last week.

Last year under Ono and two NMIFA coaches—Mae Ito and Jershwin Angeles—attended the B coaching course.

No Excuse pay dues against PayDayHoa, 14-7

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

No Excuse paid their dues against PayDay Hao, 14-7, in the start of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Slow Pitch Open League last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

Both teams got off to a slow start until No Excuse's Kimo Angailen started the onslaught of runs in the second inning with a home run. Audie Maratita followed it up with another home run, and Marvin Kaipat topped it off with a three-run home run for a 5-0 game.

The game had the makings of a home run derby as more home runs echoed off the bats of No Excuse's lineup—with a home run each by Henry Lizama Jr., Byron Kaipat, and Jerome Delos Santos in the third inning.

At this point, Payday Hao could only conjure up two runs and in the third, put up three runs via a home run by Robert Bansil and Dave Jones.

Payday Hao was still down by four runs and No Excuse only lengthened their lead as the home runs kept coming with one more by Angailen and one by J.D. Magofna.

LEIGH GASES

PayDayHao's Robert Bansil is safe by a breath at second base during their game against No Excuse in the opening day of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Slow Pitch Open League last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

No Excuse had no excuse not to win and held on after Payday Hao fell short and scored only three more runs for a 14-7 game.

Team Mac 10, Saipal 7

Team Mac defeated Saipal, 10-7, after Team Mac put up three runs in their last at-bat to secure the win.

Team Mac breezed through the first two innings and scored five in the second. Multiple base hits plus RBI doubles by Ben Higgins and Delvin Manahane put Team Mac up by four runs heading into the third inning as Saipal only scored three so far.

Saipal tried to catch up and scored three in the third inning for a close 6-7 game, but were shutout in the next three innings by Team Mac pitcher Eric Kapileo.

In the sixth inning, Team Mac pulled away with three runs for a 10-6 game and Saipal could only produce one more run in their last at-bat for the final of 10-7.

Mamaaw 17, Dat's It 5

Mamaaw showed Dat's It who's boss in a mercy run-ruled game, 17-5.

Dat's It could not put bat to ball and came up empty in the first couple innings—which was the exact opposite for Mamaaw when they scored 12 in the second inning alone.

For Mamaaw, two home runs each were made by J.J. Lifoifoi and I.J. Teigita and one each were hit by Ian Norita and Giovanni Mira.

Mamaaw's stacked lineup overpowered Dat's It and that was it for them when they could only score five runs throughout the game.

Results of the other games will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

This season's open league has 14 teams vying for the championship that is set for Oct. 29, 2023.

The teams are Mamaaw, Ready Mix, Just 4 Fun, Kebruka, PayDayHao, Aimeliik Bat Boys, Saipal, Team Mac, No Choice, No Excuse, Seaweed Vibes, TuTuramZ, Blue Jays, and Dat's it.

The Budweiser BASA League concluded its men's and women's division last July 2 with Man Amigos the men's champions and the Lady Blue Jays the women's champion.

NICKOLE

From page 20

Saipan residents Nicko and Maria Victoria is currently preparing to compete in the 2023 Kids Pan IBJJF Championship in Orlando, Florida on July 22.

Both Nicko and Nickole train in the Black Label Jiu Jitsu group.

Nickole takes after her father as he also grapples and the father and daughter tandem both won gold in the North American Grappling Association Atlanta Grappling Championship last March 25 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Before that, Nickole won gold in the South Carolina Youth Wrestling Association Rookie/Novice State Championship for the girls division and silver in the mixed division last Jan. 29, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Nicko is a U.S. Marine and a 2012 graduate of Saipan Southern High School, while his wife and Nickole's mother, Maria Victoria, is an alumnae of Marianas High School.

They now reside in Charleston, South Carolina.

According to the Newbreed Jiu Jitsu website, it is one of the largest Jiu Jitsu organizations in the combat sports industry. Their tournaments are open to all ages and you do not need to be in a team to compete.

The International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation is a for-profit company that hosts several of the biggest Brazilian jiu-jitsu tournaments in the world, including the World Jiu-Jitsu Championship, World No-Gi Championship, Pan Jiu-Jitsu Championship, and European Open Jiu-Jitsu Championship.

JEON

From page 20

netters went 2-2 in team play on Day 1 of the POJC.

Colin Ramsey, who is assisting Race in Fiji, said Jeon, Lam, and Tang saved what could've been a disastrous Day 1 for Commonwealth netters in Fiji.

"It was a tough first day for Team NMI, but we won't know much until after the second or third day. Who will be moving on and who will be battling for the lower spots," he said.

Day 2 results of the POJC will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune.*

FINANCE

From page 20

administration and is working diligently to recover funds while maintaining critical government services.

Babauta, for his part, said to his knowledge the MGOC received the full $4-million allotment for the hosting of the quadrennial event.

"Actually we had $800,000 x 5 drawdowns for a total of $4 million. We were over $2.3 million, but we had a $1-million drawdown after the Games to clear most of the outstanding. However, we still need $1.3 million to completely pay off everything."

He added that in all the MGOC spent $6.3 million to host the Mini Games last year.

In April 2021, Torres committed an additional $1 million on top of the $3 million it originally earmarked for the staging of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022.

The additional $1 million was to accommodate the inclusion of tennis, weightlifting, and outrigger canoe to the CNMI's Mini Games hosting in 2022.

Due to the economic slowdown and damage to facilities brought by Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018, the CNMI originally balked at hosting the Mini Games originally set in 2021.

The CNMI eventually accepted the hosting reins of the now 2022 Mini Games albeit a scaled-down version of it with just six events and the proposed budget was trimmed from $8 million to $3 million. It was postponed for a year due to COVID-19 concerns.

Vladimir Jr. joins Vladimir Sr. as 1st father-son HR Derby winners.

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Sports

CNMI, Guam coaches go through 1st ever NMIFA 'B' coaching course.

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Finance: Mini Games budget short by $1.52M

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Micronesian Games Organizing Committee was handicapped financially to begin with as only a little over 60% of its promised $4-million budget was allocated by the Department of Finance.

Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita told *Saipan Tribune* that according to her office records the MGOC actually didn't receive the full funding promised by the administration of former governor Ralph DLG Torres when it accepted the hosting duties for the Mini Games.

"I had advised them that according to the financial system, only a $2.48-million budget was allocated for the $4-million ARPA grant awarded to Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games," she said.

ARPA stands for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Norita

Norita, however, said despite not getting full funding promised the MGOC still went $1.45 million above the original $4-million budget.

"Expenditures to date are $5.45 million; the account is in deficit of $2.97 million. ARPA funds were used to fund this award," she said.

As to her meeting with MGOC chief executive officer Vicente "Ben" Babauta, Norita said, "I do confirm that my office had met with the organizing committee of the NMPMG in February. They wanted to follow up on outstanding payments owed to vendors for the Games."

NMPMG stands for the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games.

During the meeting, the Finance secretary said she was informed by Babauta that the previous Torres administration promised to pay the additional $1.29 million in outstanding Mini Games obligations to vendors.

"However, I confirmed that these commitments were not entered or documented in the financial system. This would be a total of $6.74 million in expenditures that only $2.48 million was budgeted for," she added.

The outstanding invoices that remain to be paid include incentives to officials, accommodation costs, performances, car rentals, shipping, utilities, among other expenses.

Norita did say that the administration of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang is cognizant of the impacts of overcommitments in ARPA funds to vendors made by the prior

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Nickole continues gold medal haul in BJJ

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Nickole Salem, center, poses with her most recent gold medal after the IBJJF Kid's American National Championships 2023 last Saturday, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Nickole Salem, a 6-year-old Brazilian Jiu Jitsu phenom with CNMI roots, has added a gold medal into her ever-growing medal collection in the IBJJF Kid's American National Championships 2023 last Saturday, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada.

She was in the featherweight 53-lb division and won via armbar against Avery Svidergol in the finals. In the semi finals, Salem defeated Svidergol via triangle choke.

Second place went to Svidergol and third place went to Olivia Colon.

Prior to this, Salem bagged another two gold medals in the Newbreed Jiu Jitsu Championship Crystal Cup at North Charleston, South Carolina last May 21.

Salem claimed the first gold medal of the event after competing in the feather-erweight-advanced division of the 46-55 lbs weight class against Colton Meadows.

She then took gold in the intermediate division after first defeating Luxen Bon in the semifinals via 5-0 points. In the championship match against Meadows again, she won via submission armbar for her second gold medal of the day.

The daughter of former

See NICKOLE on Page 19

Jeon leads CNMI winners in Day 1 of POJC

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Michael Jeon shone the brightest among the 17 CNMI players seeing action for the North Pacific Team in Day 1 of the 2023 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships last Monday in Lautoka, Fiji.

According to CNMI Sports Hall of Famer and North Pacific Team coach Jeff Race, Jeon won his boys 12 team singles match.

He was down two match points at 7-9 in the super tie-breaker and won four straight points to take it 11-9.

He then teamed up with Ryan Choi in doubles to win, 6-0, 6-2, and lead his team to victory 2-1 over Cook Islands.

Other Day 1 winners among CNMI netters include LaHunn Lam over Fiji's Frank Sun, 6-0, 6-0, in the boys 12; June Yu over Samoa's Titus Paul, 6-2, 6-4, and boys 16's Simon Tang over Luke Pierre of Cook Islands, 6-1, 6-2.

In other results, girls 16's Hoo Wang lost to third seed Freemont Gibson of Guam, 2-6, 2–6; girls 14 fourth seed Anne Lee was upset by American Samoa's Dora Moore, 3-6, 6-2, 2-10; boys 16's Henry Seungwoo Choi lost to American Samoa's Darius Carruthers, 2-6, 1-6; boys 14's Nasson Wessel challenged No. 2 seed Nicholas Montaigut of Tahiti before losing. 2-6, 6-4, 8-10; boys 14's Siwoo Lee dropped a 5-7, 3-6 game to Fiji's Uraia Ratu; girls 16's Irin Chung succumbed to Vanuatu's Abygael Coeuillet, 0-6, 5-7; and girls 14's Lina Tsukagoshi was beaten by Vanuatu's Ashanti Ligo, 1-6, 1-6.

In other team matches, the CNMI beat Tahiti, 2-1, in the girls 12 as the Commonwealth

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